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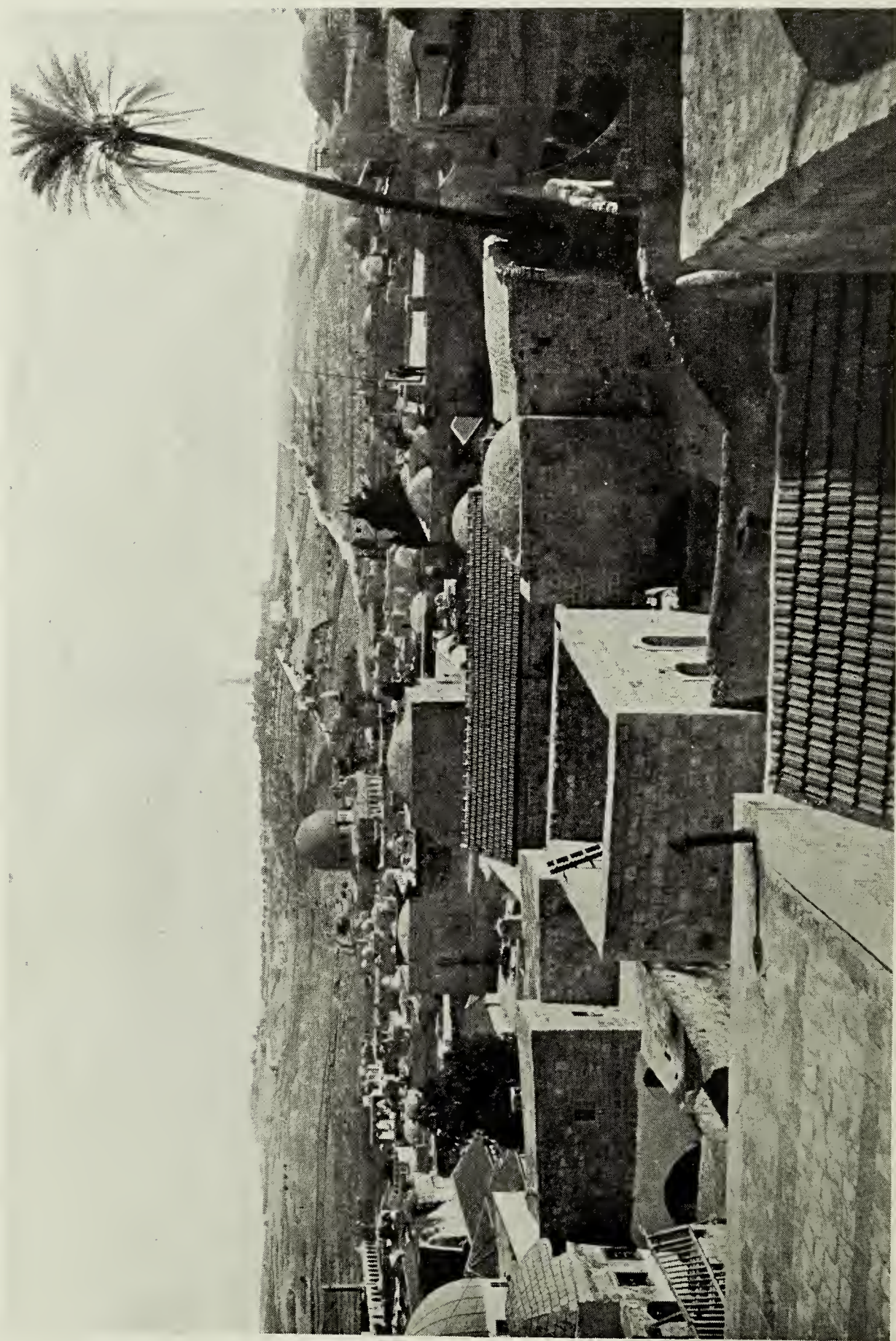
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PALESTINE



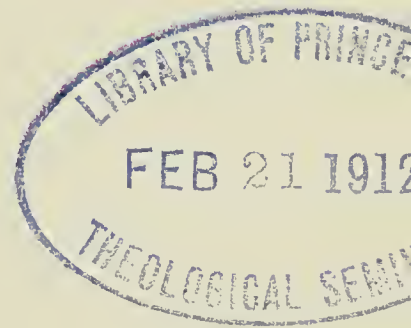
Frontispiece

JERUSALEM AND MOUNT OF OLIVES FROM THE CITADEL

PALESTINE

DEPICTED AND DESCRIBED

✓ BY
G. E. FRANKLIN
F.R.G.S.



ILLUSTRATED
WITH 376 PHOTOGRAPHS
BY THE AUTHOR

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PREFACE

It is said—I believe with perfect truth—that no country in the world has been productive of so much literature as Palestine; indeed, I hardly know what Solomon, who, in his day, said that of the making of books there was no end, would say now, if he could see the number of books published on Palestine alone. This being admittedly the case, the production of another book should require some valid reason for its inception, and excuse for its publication.

If a possessor of some old pictures of Palestine—even no older than since the early days of photography—were to compare them with the aspect of the country at the present time he would at once notice that there is a marked difference now from the time when they were taken. Owing to many changes that have transpired, and in order that pictures shall be faithful representations of the places they are intended to depict at the present time, they must be re-taken to bring them up to date.

A gentleman who had been to Palestine wished to procure some lantern slides for lecturing purposes illustrative of his subject, and called at a shop in London where such were sold to select some for his purpose. A box of slides made from very early photographs was placed before him, and after looking the slides over several times he remarked that although he had been to the places he did not recognise from the slides before him any he seemed to know. The dealer then placed another box before him with pictures

of more recent date, when he at once exclaimed: "Ah! these are something like; I recognise these at a glance," and he got what he wanted.

In some degree it is the same with literature, especially in a country like Palestine, where year by year, owing to investigation, exploration, and earnest research, fresh and important facts are brought to light, as well as changes in the development of the country; it is only reasonable to suppose that its literature requires bringing up to date in order to be of use to present-day travellers—to give them the result of the latest discoveries, as well as a faithful representation of the conditions of its life and scenery at the present time.

Another reason, and one that weighed much with me, is the fact that the advance in civilising conditions by the settlement of many European colonists and merchants is bringing about at last many changes in this hitherto unchanging land; roads and railways are being pushed out in all directions; hotels are being opened, modern houses are being built, American self-binding reapers have been introduced, and are now being used for cutting the corn in the great plains; the natives are beginning to imitate European customs, by wearing European dress, adopting European systems of education, and employing European implements of trade and industry. Even the conservatism of the old government régime is giving way under the desire to copy Western ideas and to advance.

Well-to-do ladies are beginning to adopt Parisian fashions, and may be seen wearing dresses that may have been purchased in the *Magazins du Louvre* or in Oxford Street, in place of the beautiful indoor native attire like that which their grandmothers and their grandmothers' grandmothers wore from the earliest ages.

The worst of all this is that innumerable old customs which illustrate Bible scenes and incidents, and which explain and throw light on so many passages of Scripture

not properly understood, are fast dying out, and I have longed for some reliable and enduring record of them to be preserved. I have therefore tried to secure some photographs of the life of the people and customs of the land, taken in most cases without their knowledge, as well as recent views of the scenery of the country.

Then, again, in my lectures on the Palestine cruises I have often been urged to embody in printed form the information I then tried to impart, but, being painfully aware of my own limitations, I have tried to induce others I have believed more fitted to undertake the literary portion of the work, only to find that their duties have been too heavy to allow of this. I have, therefore, tried my best to fill the need, and, without attempting to specialise in any one department, I have rather aimed to produce a book useful to the general reader, a help to the tourist, and some assistance, I trust, to those Sunday-school teachers, Bible-class leaders, and even ministers who, being busy workers, have but little time and opportunity to make a digest from the various works already published.

I believe, too, some things will be found, never before printed, that are worth recording; the pictures may be found useful to travellers in helping them to identify the scenes they visit, and perhaps also be a source of pleasure to those who, having been to Palestine, will recall many pleasant memories as they look through the pages, besides giving those who have not had the pleasure of visiting the country some little idea of what it is like.

But while I am endeavouring to fill—as I believe—a felt need, I have to acknowledge my obligations to those many writers who have already appeared in the field, whose names are legion—too numerous to mention—but, gladly remembering the works of Geikie, Smith, Condor, Bliss, and Niel, my thanks are also due to Rolla Floyd, Dr. Serah Merril, Rev. J. Hanauer, and Miss Goodrich Freer. No doubt there are others also with whom I have been brought

into contact during travelling, and who have always proved most willing to give ready help and information.

I have confined my imaginary journeyings to the places and routes usually taken by travellers, as I deemed the book would be thereby rendered more useful, and I have many times visited all the places described so as to verify, on the spot, the information given.

G. E. FRANKLIN.

Rickmansworth, 1911.

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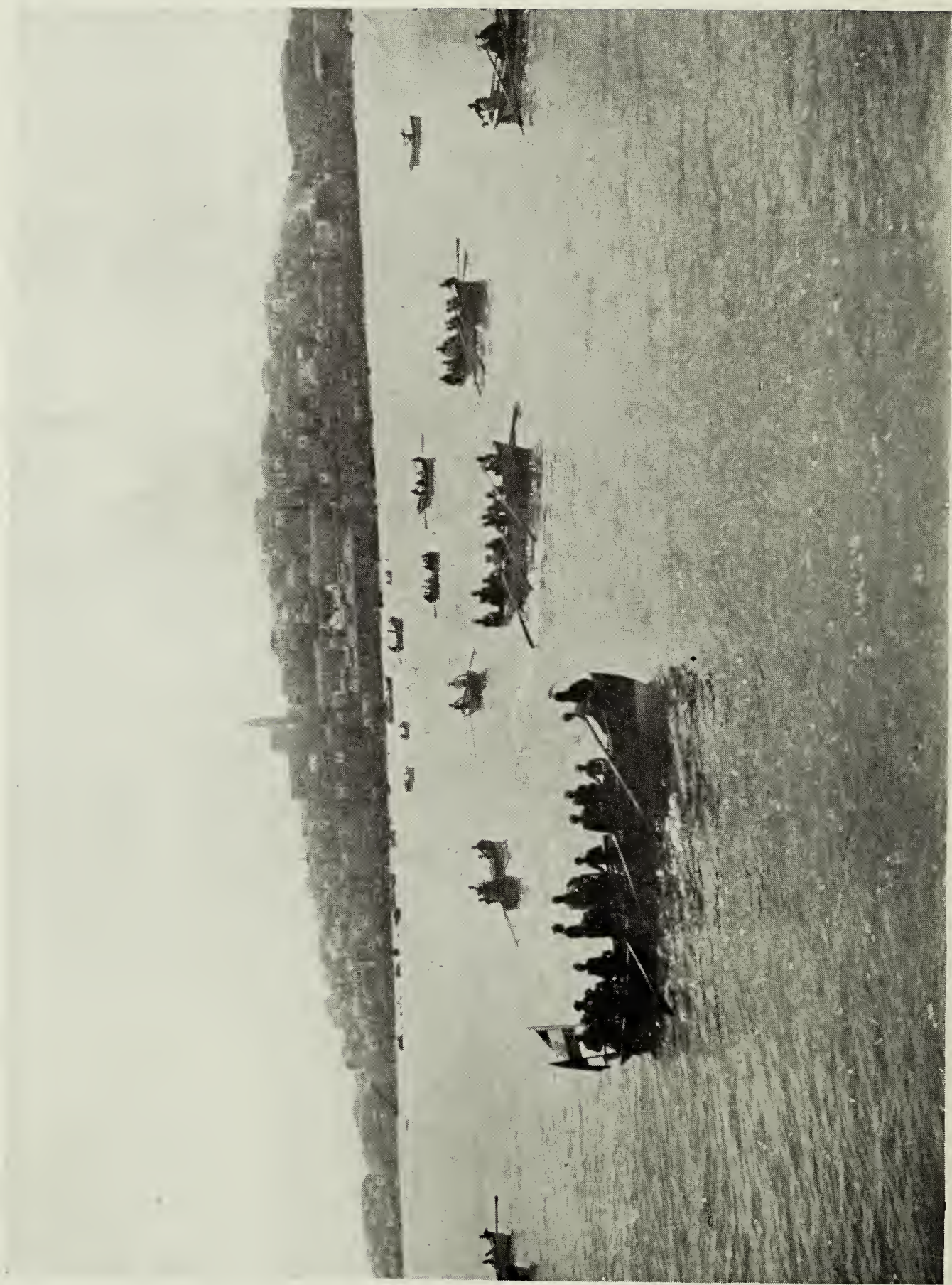
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LANDING AT JAFFA

PALESTINE

CHAPTER I

JAFFA AND SURROUNDINGS

HAPPY indeed is the traveller who, on approaching the shores of Palestine, finds the sea calm; for it is no uncommon occurrence to find on nearing Jaffa that the waves are rolling up too boisterously to permit of landing there, and in this case the tourist is put to the inconvenience of being taken on to the next or whatever other port he can be put ashore.

Perhaps the most common thought that comes to the mind of the average tourist when arriving at Jaffa, and finding that all the landing has to be accomplished in small boats, is: Why do they not construct a harbour here?

As Jaffa has become a port of considerable importance, a large export trade being carried on in oranges, etc., as well as its being the place where many thousands of pilgrims and tourists land every year, it is manifest that a harbour, giving easier access to the land, would be no mean boon, and would give a stimulus to the prosperity of the place, which is now so lacking in convenience for landing and embarking pilgrims and merchandise.

It is said that a French steamship company has offered to construct a harbour here at a cost of half a million sterling, conditionally, of course, upon their being granted the monopoly of its use, or of collecting the dues from the steamers of other companies who wish to use it; but that, as yet, no influence has been sufficient to extract from the Sublime Porte the necessary firman granting them the concession.

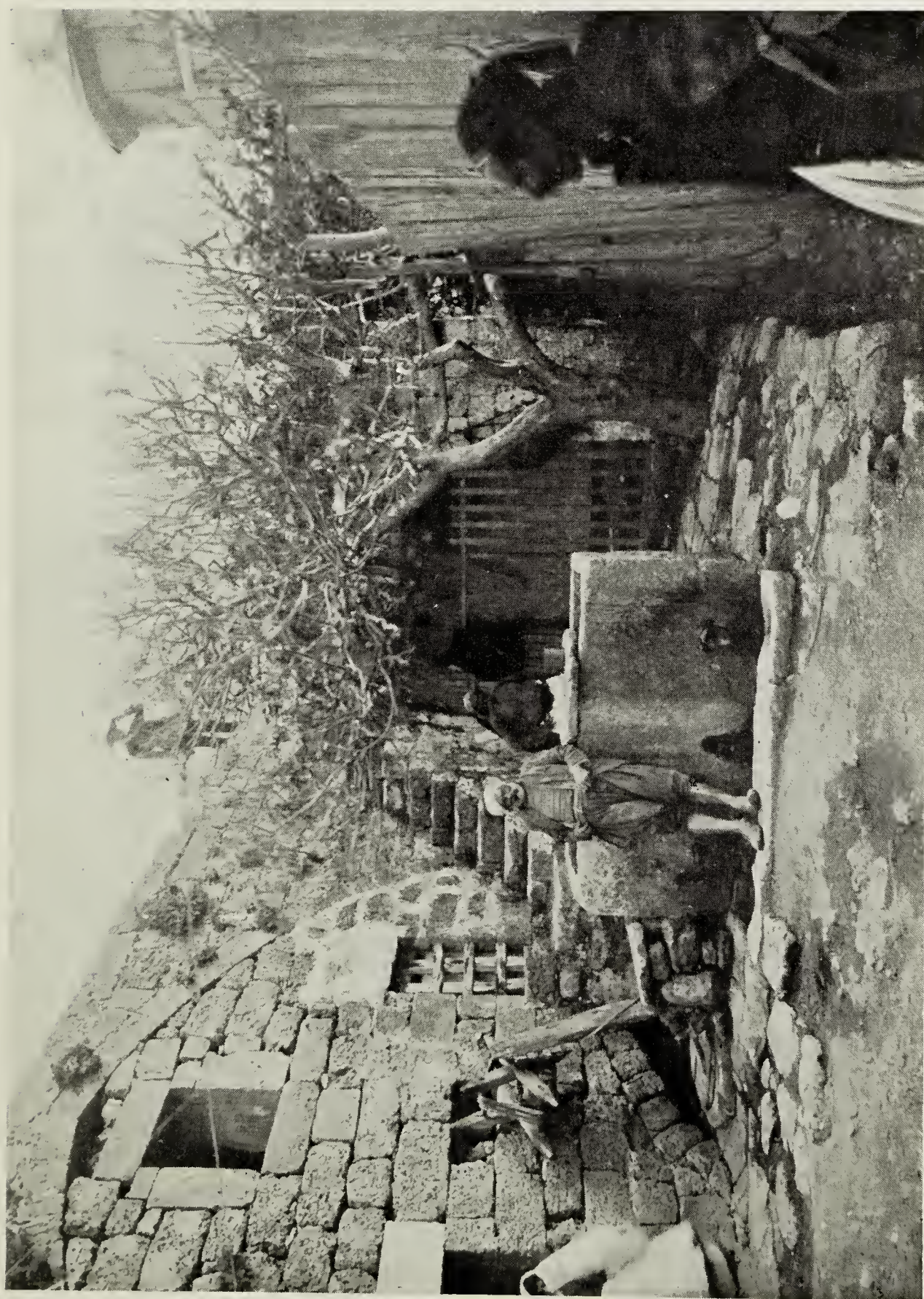
Perhaps the Government is inclined to look upon the difficulty in landing as a safeguard from invasion, and that permission is withheld for the same reason that our own Government refuses to allow a Channel tunnel to be constructed; and probably, too, the Turkish Government is getting rather chary of granting concessions to syndicates of other nationalities in view of past experiences—to wit, the Haifa-Hauran railway, and the establishment of the various post offices of other nations in the country.

But it is to be hoped that under the new Turkish régime the time is not far distant when some better method of landing on this rockbound coast than the very unsatisfactory plan now in vogue will be provided, or, better still, when a railway will be made round the coast from Port Said.

Jaffa is very beautifully situated, as viewed from the sea, on a rounded hill; the name of the place signifies beautiful, and well it bears out its name. It is with feelings that can be better imagined than described that the traveller takes his first survey of the Holy Land as the vessel lowers its anchor in the roadstead, and to pilgrims it is the occasion for the manifestation of intensely devotional feelings. To many of these a visit to the Holy Land has been the dream of a lifetime; for its accomplishment they have worked, and saved of their little earnings, and many of them have had to pinch severely in order to be able to save the few pounds necessary for the journey.

Many of them have walked hundreds of miles through Europe, and endured the most intense privation. Some are old, and on many the privation they have endured has told terribly; but now that they are within sight of the goal of their hopes, their hardships are all forgotten in the joy of the moment, and their hearts swell with a gratitude that often finds its expression in silent prayer, or a song of rapturous and exultant joy.

To Protestant travellers—though the outward manifestation may not be so observable—the thrill of emotion is not less real. We gaze upon the shore, and a crowd of memories



HOUSE OF SIMON THE TANNER

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JAFFA FROM THE SANDS

pass before the mind : This is the Holy Land ; the Land of the Bible ; the country of Jacob and David, of Rachel and Ruth ; the Land wherein lay the scenes of those thrilling stories, "so true and noble, of men so brave to see," as recorded in the Biblical narratives ; and, more than all, it is the land that saw the doings of that wonderful life, and the pangs of that tragic death, upon Calvary's cross, of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

We remember that it was to this town that Hiram, king of Tyre, sent the cedarwood for the building of Solomon's temple ; it was from this port that Jonah sailed on his tempestuous voyage ; here Dorcas lived, and wrought her works of charity ; and yonder house, by the beach, is the house of Simon the tanner, upon whose roof the Apostle Peter had that vision, which transformed the narrow-minded Jew into a Christian statesman, and opened up to the Gentile world the blessings of the Gospel dispensation.

Like most Oriental cities, we find that Jaffa—although beautiful when viewed from a distance, is the reverse of beautiful in the midst of its streets, which are dirty and narrow. But we remind ourselves that we have not come to the Holy Land as sanitary inspectors, or to pick out all the rotten apples we can find : rather have we come to try and awaken some of the sacred memories in this old-world land ; and we soon turn with eagerness to the house of Simon the tanner, an old stone house built very near the sea.

We cannot be quite sure, of course, that this is the actual house at which Peter lodged, for many centuries have passed since then ; but we are sure it was a house similar to this, with its outside staircase and flat roof ; and there is every reason to believe that it occupies the site assigned to it by tradition. When, some years ago, the Sultan gave an order to demolish the old sea-wall which was built by Vespasian, and which ran along here, as it had got into a dangerously ruinous condition, the workmen, in removing the débris, came upon several stone tanner's vats, exactly like those used nineteen hundred years ago ; and one of these tanner's vats is still seen *in situ* in the courtyard of

the house ; we see it in our picture, with the old man leaning against it, and the building in the background is the house of Simon the tanner. This man, we found, is an old hero ; he possesses a gold medal and a certificate presented to him by the British Government for rescuing sixteen persons from drowning when a British vessel was wrecked near here.

In the courtyard is a fine fig tree standing ; and also, near the wall of the house on the left, there is a well of water, and it may be that the Apostle himself drank of the water from this very well. Ascending the outside staircase to the housetop, we get a fine view across the broad, bright sweep of the Mediterranean Sea—the highway to the lands of the Gentiles—with the rocks which make landing difficult in the foreground. These rocks are called the rocks of Andromeda, these being the rocks to which—according to the ancient Gentile legend—she was bound by the cruel monster, afterwards slain by Perseus.

It is well to notice here that these flat roofs are typical of Palestine housetops ; and the roofs are used by the natives for many purposes. Upon them the children are sent up to play ; here the good wife hangs out her clothes from the wash ; upon them the master of the house retires for his afternoon siesta, or to meet with his friends ; and during the summer the roof forms the sleeping apartment for the family. Indeed, it can be put to so many purposes, that an Irish tourist who came here said he considered the most convenient place in the house was on the top of the roof.

There are many allusions to these housetops in Scripture : Saul communed with Samuel on the housetop ; the people of Jerusalem assembled on the housetops to watch for their Assyrian foes coming ; proclamations were made from the housetops ; Absalom spread a tent on his father's housetop ; and Solomon—wise man that he was—says : “It is better for a man to dwell on the housetop, than with a brawling woman in the house.”

One of the first things that will arrest the attention of the visitor after arriving at Jaffa will be to notice the enormous

loads the porters—or *attals*, as they are called here—have to carry. As, until recently, there were no roads in Palestine in modern times, and even now the lanes near the sea are too narrow for carts or wheeled vehicles, all the merchandise from and to the ships has to be carried on the backs of men. Frequently these loads are of such enormous size and weight that they have to be lifted on to the backs of the men by several others, and, once there, they cannot put them down of themselves; to attempt to do so would result in their being crushed, perhaps killed, and so they have to stagger on, giving a grunt at every step to relieve themselves, until their destination is reached, when other men will lift the burden from their backs, to the poor victims' great relief. These *attals* are an old institution; there are many references to them in the Scriptures. It was probably to these Christ referred, and perhaps He was looking at them when He gave the loving invitation: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; . . . For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Then, in some cases, the loads men have to carry are used to typify the burden of sin. Thus, the Psalmist speaks of his sins which "have gone over my head." The immense loads these men carry often reach far over their heads, and bearing this in mind the point of the Psalmist's figure is better understood—his sins were so enormous, his burden of sin so great—the load reached over his head. Our Lord, we remember, compared the spiritual slavery under which the Pharisees oppressed the common people to "burdens grievous to be borne, laid on men's shoulders."

Before going far we are made conscious of the fact that we are transferred, so to speak, to primitive times, and the primitive customs strike our attention at every turn. We are surprised to find under a low Bedouin tent a blacksmith's workshop. Here, with the simplest tools, and under—to our minds—almost impossible circumstances, horses and mules are shod, ploughshares are made and sharpened, and the thousand-and-one things that are

wanted from a blacksmith's shop are attended to in a manner that evinces great skill. A hole is made in the ground for the furnace, a stone serves as an anvil, and the women of the establishment sit on the ground dexterously working some goatskin bags which serve as a bellows to force into the fire the necessary current of air to make it glow with heat. The men squat on their haunches as they work; indeed, it would be impossible for them to stand upright in the simple workshop, and what is lacking in tools is made up in toes, for their toes and feet are frequently brought into requisition as well as their hands for the accomplishment of their work.

At a little distance from the town, on the Jerusalem road, we come to a building which, after the manner of these institutions, serves both as a tomb and a fountain. This is the tomb of a former celebrated Sheik of Jaffa, Abu Nebût, but now often called the tomb, or sometimes house, of Dorcas, tradition averring that here stood the house where Dorcas lived, and hereabouts Peter restored to life the benefactress who, by her kindness to the poor, immortalised her name, and whose best monument is the memory of her almsgiving and deeds of love.

At a short distance from this fountain there has lately been discovered what is believed by some to be the real tomb of Dorcas, for in making excavations for foundations, some tomb caves were discovered, and in one of these was found a rude painting representing Peter in the act of restoring Tabitha, and the painting, which may have been placed there in crusading times, it is thought, was placed there to perpetuate an old tradition of this being her burial-place on her decease.

The streets of Jaffa, excepting the market-place, are like those of most Eastern towns, unpaved, dirty and narrow. In fine weather the rough and unlevel roadway is passable with care, the principal difficulty being, when one meets a loaded camel, to

“find some friendly alley, lane, or nook by which to escape.”



TOMB OF ABU NEBÛT



STREET SCENE, JAFFA

To face p. 6



ARAB BLACKSMITH'S SHOP



BED ON ROOFTOP



ORANGE FRUIT AND FLOWERS



TOMB OF DORCAS



MR. FLOYD'S HOUSE



MR. FLOYD AND WIFE

[To face p. 4]



MARKET-PLACE, JAFFA

[To face p. 6



THE ORANGE GROVES, JAFFA

[To face p. 8

But after a storm the roads are converted into a veritable slough of filthy quagmire, and lucky is the person who escapes stepping into a hole filled with liquid pollution. To the natives this makes but little difference, as they mostly go bare-footed, and when necessary bare-legged, so their feet and legs need only a rinse in the sea to cleanse them of their defilement and make them as comfortable as they wish—a proceeding which they consider much easier than levelling, draining and paving the streets; and, besides, it does not always rain.

The market-place is much wider, regard being had for the exposing of their wares; but the road is in an execrable condition; no rule of the road exists, and when the space is crowded all is pell-mell confusion.

It is very interesting, however, to watch the—to our minds—strange way in which they conduct their business, the curious variety of commodities they have to sell, and, above all, the splendid varieties of fruits, especially oranges, which are exposed on mean and sometimes dirty receptacles.

One of the most beautiful sights the traveller will notice after landing in Jaffa will be the orange gardens, from which literally millions of the golden fruit are gathered and exported every year, England taking the larger share of them.

There are about five hundred separate gardens around Jaffa, comprising some 10,000 acres in all; but these are every year extending farther inland. Much of the land near the sea has been reclaimed from the barren, sandy coast; on land, indeed, which had been thought to be so worthless that, when permission to purchase 5000 acres of the land was first sought, the Sultan's agent reported it to be so valueless that it was given them. The sharp colonist had, however, discovered that beneath the sterile sand fertile soil existed, and only a few feet from the surface streams of fresh water percolated, flowing from the Judæan hills to the sea, and the land only needed cultivation and irrigation to make it some of the richest land in the world.

The gardens each contain one or two wells, from which they are irrigated in the Eastern fashion by a *sakieh* wheel during the whole of the rainless season, which lasts from April till November. The orange harvest begins in November, and lasts until the following May, the trees during this period being very beautifully covered with both fruit, in all stages of growth, and also blossom.

“ Some ripening, some ready to fall;
Some blossomed, some to bloom;
Like gorgeous hangings on the wall
Of some rich and princely room.”

A stroll along the lanes between the gardens, at the time the trees are covered with blossom and exhaling their grateful perfume, is a delightful experience; the foliage and blossom have such a freshness about them to please the eye, while the perfume is delicious. Out of this vast industry another enterprise has arisen, that of bee-farming, the honey obtained from the orange-blossom being largely sought after and justly esteemed.

The whole of these and other industries are carried on by Europeans—mostly German colonists, the natives having little aptness for the work; and under the fostering care and business energy manifested, not only here but in other places in the country, Palestine promises to become again “a land flowing with milk and honey,” and “the wilderness and solitary place to rejoice and blossom as the rose.”

The colony as we now see it, among which the hotels are situated, was originally founded by a sect of Americans calling themselves the “Church of the Redeemer,” who, under the leadership of a visionary enthusiast named Adams, came here with the object of building up the waste places of Palestine.

They were quickly disillusioned; unlooked-for difficulties and discouragements met them at every turn from their first landing. The authorities looked upon their invasion with suspicion, and put every obstacle in their way; the

natives stole their goods; and, worse than all, disease broke out among them with such fatal effect that nearly forty of their number died within six weeks. Besides, they had no means of support, and although they began to plant, yet, while the crops were growing, they were starving and dying in such numbers that the survivors became panic-stricken and fled, abandoning their houses and compounds, their only thought and desire being to get away; and Mr. Floyd told me that those who, in America, were the most anxious to come, saying they would come if they had to sail the Atlantic on a raft, were the most eager to get away. Mark Twain, in his *New Pilgrim's Progress*, so graphically describes their flight that I cannot do better than quote him in full. He says—

“At Jaffa, we had taken on board some forty members of a very celebrated community. They were male and female; babies, young boys and young girls; young married people and some who had passed a shade beyond the prime of life. I refer to the ‘Adams Jaffa Colony,’ others had deserted before. Our forty were miserable enough in the first place, and they lay about the decks sea-sick all the voyage, which about completed their misery, I take it. However, one or two young men remained upright, and by constant persecution we wormed out of them some little information. They gave it reluctantly, and in a very fragmentary condition; for having been shamefully humbugged by this prophet, they felt humiliated and unhappy. In such circumstances people do not like to talk. The colony was a complete fiasco. I have already said that such as could get away did so, from time to time. The forty we brought away with us were chiefly destitute, though not all of them. They wished to get to Egypt. What might become of them then they did not know, and probably did not care—anything to get away from hated Jaffa. They had little to hope for. Because after many appeals to the sympathy of New England, made by strangers of Boston through the newspapers, and after the establishment of an office there for the reception of moneyed contributions for the Jaffa colonists, one dollar was subscribed. The Consul-General for Egypt showed me the

paragraph which mentioned the circumstance, and mentioned also the discontinuance of the effort and the closing of the office.

"It was evident that practical New England was not sorry to be rid of such visionaries, and was not in the least inclined to hire anybody to bring them back again to her. Still, to get to Egypt was something in the eyes of the unfortunate colonists, hopeless as the prospect ever seemed of getting farther. Thus circumstanced, they landed at Alexandria from our ship. One of our passengers inquired of the Consul-General what it would cost to send these people to their home in Maine by way of Liverpool, and he said fifteen hundred dollars in gold would do it. Mr. B. gave his check for the money, and so the troubles of the Jaffa colonists were at an end."

Although Mark Twain is not supposed to write history, I have been informed that his account of the exodus is substantially correct.

But the Germans had sharp eyes, and no sooner had the Americans abandoned their houses and lands than some German settlers "jumped their claims," and being of a practical turn of mind, besides being backed with sufficient capital, their enterprise has succeeded, and they have come to stay. But not quite all the Americans left, two families remained behind: one Mrs. Clark, left a widow a few weeks after their arrival, with several children on her hands, determined to stay on, being loyal to her husband's wishes. She married again, brought up her family, two of whom still reside in Palestine. One is Mr. Herbert Clark, the representative of the Clark's tourist firm in Jerusalem, who now owns considerable property in that city; while his sister still owns the old property at Jaffa, which has been converted into Cook's tourist office there, as she herself resides in Jerusalem.

Mr. Rolla Floyd and his wife also remained. Any one who is acquainted with Mr. Floyd readily forms the impression that he is not a man to be beaten in whatever he undertakes; he is not to be disheartened by opposition or discouraged by difficulties, and so, as he jokingly informs



VIEW FROM ROOF OF SIMON'S HOUSE



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A BURDEN-BEARER



ORANGE GROVES AND GERMAN COLONY, JAFFA



STREET IN JAFFA



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AN "ATTAL" OR BURDEN-BEARER



[To face p. 10

JAFFA FROM THE ORANGE GROVES



MISS ARNOTT'S MISSION SCHOOL



MISS ARNOTT AND A CLASS

[To face p. 12

us, he has been "maniac" enough—he comes from the state of "Maine"—to stay.

When Mr. Thomas Cook began to take parties to the Holy Land, he found in Mr. Floyd just the man he required, and he made him his first resident representative. When the connection with the successors of the great tourist firm ceased, Mr. Floyd did business on his own account, and became the most renowned dragoman in the country. He was always found genial, resourceful and good-tempered under the most trying circumstances. He personally conducted President Grant on his visit to the Holy Land, also General Gordon and many royalties. He made with his own hands the first wheeled vehicle used in Palestine in modern times, and drove it, to the wonderment of the natives, to Jerusalem, establishing a regular carriage service between the two places, until the Government purchased the concern. He was also the first to drive a carriage on the road to Bethlehem, his passenger being the Emperor of Austria. The road was rather "bumpy" in those early times, and the drive was somewhat exciting. The Emperor told him at the finish: "Floyd, if ever I get into a difficult position I shall send for you to get me out."

The original frame house he brought with him from America is still his country seat at Jaffa, although he usually resides at Jerusalem now, in well-earned, comfortable retirement.

The work of the German colonists in Palestine is not confined to the regeneration of the soil; they are a distinctly religious community, mostly of the Lutheran faith, and their influence with the natives among whom they live, and many of whom they employ, is essentially good, their honest and fair dealings and conduct being on the side of truth and righteousness. They have built for themselves handsome places of worship, and it is a pleasing sight to see them going up to the house of God on the Sabbath, often singing as they go.

But it is the work of Miss Arnott among the girls at Jaffa that deserves special mention in connection with the

moral and spiritual regeneration of the people. Up to 1863 the girls of the country were utterly neglected; they had no form of education or training, and the degradation of the females was appalling. Miss Arnott began in that year classes for the girls. For a long time she was the only European in the place, and she found much to discourage her; but, undeterred by difficulties, she bravely stuck to her self-imposed task, and has ever since that time devoted her life and her means to the uplifting of the condition and status of her sex. In Mr. Thomas Cook, the pioneer of the great tourists' business, she found a warm friend and helper, and he, in conducting his parties through the country, generally made a point of taking them to see Miss Arnott and her work.

At his death she sustained an irreparable loss, for although Mr. John Cook maintained for a time an interest in the work so approved by his father, yet the parties ceased to be taken to the mission-house, the present-day exigencies of modern travel, with the new railway to Jerusalem, not allowing time for this, and the dragomans to whom the care of the tourists were committed not themselves feeling sufficient interest in the work to make the effort to do so.

For nearly fifty years Miss Arnott has almost uninterruptedly continued her good work, with the most gratifying results. The girls have been trained in useful work and domestic duties that have stood them in good stead when in after life they have had homes of their own. The tone of the religious teaching has always been high, and many of the girls have been brought to the Saviour.

The last time I visited Miss Arnott's house, I entered a room where the youngest class were singing very sweetly—

“Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so”—

and I could not but feel, as I thought that these dear girls would be the mothers in the land in the next generation, that here lay the hope for the country: that in this, and the



SARONĀ

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similar blessed ministries carried on in other places, "the Dayspring from on high" is arising upon the land, and dark though the outlook has been during so many centuries, yet the clouds are dispersing; the rays of the Sun of Righteousness are permeating into the dark places, and we may have reason to hope that the glorious light of the Gospel of Christ will spread and increase in strength and power until it reaches the perfect day.

CHAPTER II

GOING UP TO JERUSALEM

THE journey from Jaffa to Jerusalem may be made by either road or rail; as, however, it takes a long day to go by carriages, and the journey by rail can be accomplished in less than four hours, most persons now prefer to go by train. Moreover, it is more interesting to go by railway than the road, as one can see from the train all the places of Biblical interest that can be seen on the carriage-road except one, and ten others that cannot be seen from the road at all. It is fifty-six miles from Jaffa to Jerusalem by train, but the latter part of the journey has necessarily to be done slowly, as it is a mountain railway, and the ascent among the Judæan hills is in some places so steep that the cogwheel system has to be adopted. Although it must be admitted that the railway to Jerusalem forms an easier and cheaper method of getting to the city of the Great King for the tourist and tripper, and, moreover, is no mean boon to the crowds of pilgrims who every year come to visit the Holy City, and who formerly had to walk the whole distance, yet it certainly detracts from the sentiment of the historic journey, and to those who can afford the time the ride by road, either going or returning, should be undertaken. How many thousands have traversed these old paths! Some, humble believers who longed for a sight of the haunts and homes of their risen Lord; some, valiant crusaders who thirsted to rescue the sacred sites from the grasp of pagans and infidels; some, perhaps, honest doubters who undertook the journey to find some evidences to fortify their faith; and others, to satisfy a longing to see for themselves the places about which they had often read, and find explanation, illustration, and confirmation of the narratives and facts contained in Holy Writ.

The carriage-road, as we now find it, owes its inception to the visit of our late King Edward, who, in 1862 when he was Prince of Wales, visited the Holy Land. The Sultan of that time, wishing to show him a special favour, had this road constructed for his benefit.

Since that time other roads have been made or improved for the occasion of the visit of some royal or distinguished personage. Thus the tourists of the present day owe much to the visit of the German Emperor in 1898, when an extraordinary effort was made, in this direction, to allow His Majesty to travel through the country as easily as possible. The roads to Hebron and Jericho were repaired, and a new road to Nablous commenced. The traveller of to-day, who comfortably rides in a landau, can scarcely realise that the first carriage driven in the country was made and driven by a man still hale and vigorous, and that twenty years or so ago the only carriages that could be hired were imported and owned by Messrs. Cook & Son.

Then, as roads were extended, some second-hand carriages were imported by enterprising traders, and now there are several up-to-date carriage factories turning out conveyances as often as required. Our picture shows one of these roads in course of construction, and we find it is an old custom to make or repair roads when any distinguished personage is visiting the countries of the East. From time immemorial it has been the custom on such an occasion to send on labourers as forerunners to put the roads in repair—to clear away the obstructions, to level down the hillocks, fill up the hollow places, and straighten the crooked ways. We can understand from such customs the language of the prophet concerning the triumphal return of the exiles from Babylon under the guidance of God Himself as their Leader: "Prepare ye the way for Jehovah, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain."

For the first dozen miles the railway follows pretty much

the course of the road. On leaving the station we soon see on our left the pretty settlement of Sarona, a colony of agriculturalists who are a branch of the German colony we have had under review. The land here is found to be remarkably fertile, and water is found everywhere at a moderate depth. Vines thrive here admirably, and good crops of wheat, barley, and other cereals well pay for cultivation. There is a windmill at the colony, and all the work is carried out under modern conditions. We now pass through the beautiful orange gardens which are constantly being extended farther inland, the orange bushes during the winter months being richly laden with golden fruit. We next pass a village on the left—Hazar Shual, from whereabouts in Old Testament times Samson got his Philistine wife. Next we pass through the fields where he liberated the foxes (with firebrands tied to their tails) among the standing corn, in revenge for the loss of his wife. We are now in the well-cultivated Plain of Shāron, the low-lying plain between the hills and the sea. In thirty-five minutes after leaving Jaffa we arrive at Lydda, the first station, also called Lod in the Old Testament, and which was built fourteen hundred years before Christ. It was at Lydda that Peter visited the saints, and cured Æneas, who was sick of the palsy, and had kept his bed for eight years. It is a pity that the village itself is so entirely hidden from the railway by the fine olive grove on the left that one cannot get a glimpse of it, although it only lies about five minutes' distance away. There is a fine old mosque in Lydda, adapted from the remains of a crusading church, the altar of which covers the reputed site of the tomb of St. George, the patron saint of England, who, it is claimed, was both born and buried here.

A few minutes after leaving Lydda we see on our right, quite close to the railway, an open space containing a *wely*, or tomb of a saint. There are about three hundred of these places in Palestine, and these are without doubt a survival of the high or holy places of the heathen Canaanitish nations of pre-Israelitish times, which the children of

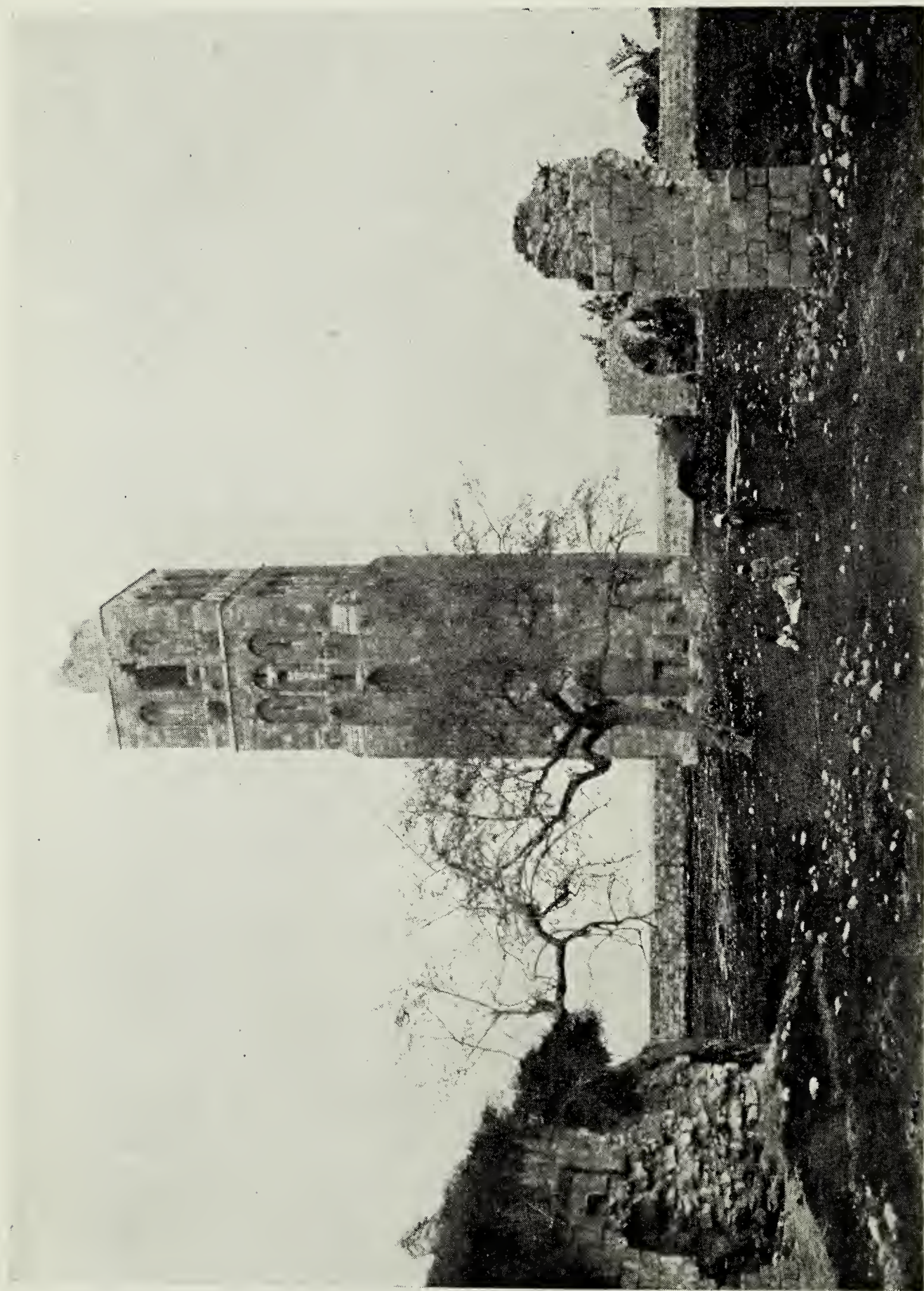


LYDDA



WELY, NEAR LYDDA

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TOWER OF RAMLEH

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Israel, on taking possession of the country, were specially commanded to destroy. In Deuteronomy we read the people were charged on their entrance to the promised land: "Ye shall utterly destroy all the places wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods." It is interesting to remember that the present inhabitants of Palestine, that is, the natives—excluding, of course, the Jews, the aggregation of races that have settled in and round about Jerusalem, and the Bedouin, or nomadic tribes—are undoubtedly the direct descendants of those old Canaanites whom Joshua found in the land when he came to subdue it. We read that the people of the land played upon Joshua a trick, and by fraud obtained from him a promise, on his oath, that he would not exterminate or destroy them.

When Joshua found out the deceit that they had practised upon him he was very angry, yet for his oath's sake he said he would not destroy them; but he made them hewers of stone and drawers of water—that is, bond-servants to the Israelites. Now we know that the Jews, their conquerors, have long since been exiled into every land, but the conquered have remained, and their descendants are the Belladeen and Fellaheen we find in the land to-day.

They still practise many customs their forefathers did thousands of years ago, which have come down from father to son through the ages; and the practice of praying at these shrines is one of these customs. Although the religion of the peasantry is nominally Moslem, yet we find as we pass through the country that the bulk of them know but little of the religion of Mohamed, and often, indeed, spend their lives without ever entering a mosque. Their religion in practice is more pagan than anything else; in fact, it is closely assimilated to the worship and beliefs of their Canaanitish forefathers.

The Arabic name of these tomb sanctuaries is *Mukim*, which word is derived from the very similar Hebrew word *Makooam*, which is the word used in the Old Testament

to designate these shrines; and the same word is also used to designate the places which the people were to build for the worship of Jehovah: "Offer not thy worship in every *Makooam* thou seest; but in the *Makooams* that Jehovah shall choose, there shalt thou offer thy burnt-offering." And the Lord promised them: "In all *Makooams* where I record My Name, I will come and bless thee." David has some striking and beautiful references to these shrines, or places of Eastern worship: "I love the habitation of Thy house; I love the *Makooam* where Thine honour dwelleth." And he records his vow that he will give himself no sleep or rest until he build a *Makooam* for Jehovah, a great tabernacle for the Mighty One of Jacob. Solomon, in his beautiful prayer at the solemn dedication of the temple planned by his father, constantly calls it "this *Makooam*." "And hearken Thou," he prays, "when they shall pray towards this *Makooam*, then hear Thou in the *Makooam* of Thy dwelling in heaven."

In connection with these tombs, or shrines, there is generally a sacred tree, every twig of which is holy, and the natives would on no account use any part of such a tree as firewood. Often pieces of coloured rag may be seen tied to the branches, recording some vow, and the leaves of the tree are taken to make into a kind of poultice to apply to their wounds or sores, the people believing they possess some curative properties. Possibly the leaves of some of the trees may possess some balsamic or medicinal properties, and no doubt this is referred to in the Revelation, and it is from this circumstance the figure takes its rise—of "the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations."

Soon after leaving Lydda we see at the left Jimzo, the site of Gimzo, one of the royal cities of the Philistines, which they took from the Israelites in the reign of King Ahaz. After ten more minutes we reach Ramleh, a traditional site of Arimathæa, where there is seen, just before we enter the station, on the right, about a quarter of a mile away, an old crusading tower and vast ruins of an ancient



THE " LILY OF THE FIELD " (ANEMONE CORONARIA)

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PLAIN OF SHARON



PLOUGHING IN PALESTINE

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church. In 1099 Ramleh was occupied by the Crusaders, and in 1266 it was taken by the Moslems. It is now a prosperous-looking town, containing several factories for the manufacture of olive-oil soap, also some potteries and a tannery.

Although Ramleh and Lydda are in such close proximity to each other, the people of each town are looked upon as belonging to a separate race, and it rarely happens that they intermarry. At the time of the plague, a few years since, when Lydda lost half its population during its ravages, so strict was the cordon established half-way between the two places, that not a single person of Ramleh fell a victim to the disease.

The two-miles' walk between the two places is a very pleasant one, and here during the early spring months may be seen growing in the greatest perfection that loveliest of flowers, the scarlet *Anemone coronaria*, literally covering the plain.

As we pass through the plain of Sharon the passage of Scripture—"I am the Rose of the Sharon, and the Lily of the valley"—naturally comes into the mind, and there is no doubt that this flower is the lily referred to. The Hebrew word which the translators have made to read Lily is *Shusan*, which is a generic rather than a specific term, and may mean any bulbous flower. In any case it must mean a red flower, as Solomon in another place compares the ruby lips of his lady-love to it; and there is a beautiful old Jewish tradition which goes far to confirm it.

The old tradition says that when Hiram, king of Tyre, sent the cedarwood for the building of Solomon's temple, he sent as a personal present to King Solomon a gorgeous scarlet robe—the Tyrians were always famed for the splendour of their dyes—and Solomon was very proud of this robe. He often walked abroad in it to let his subjects see him thus gorgeously arrayed, and the people thought him a very glorious personage. But one day a little girl brought him a nosegay of these flowers, and Solomon was so struck with the greater beauty and brilliance of the

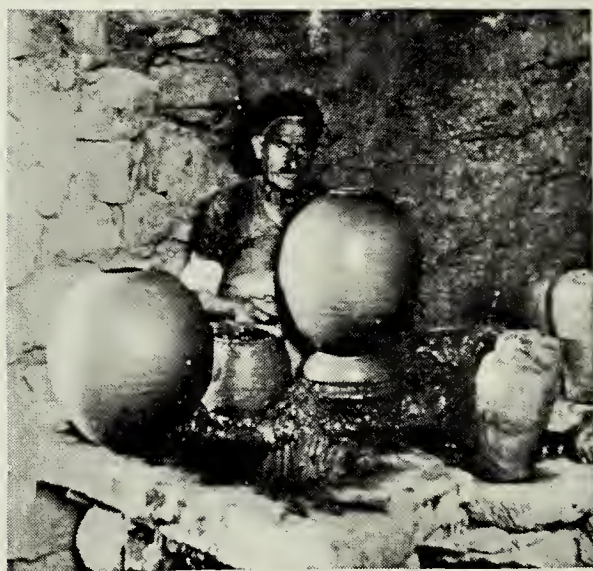
colouring of the flowers to even his treasured robe, that he called the attention of those around him to the greater beauty of the works of God than those of men. It is probable that the Saviour knew of this tradition, and to it He referred when He said: "Consider the lilies, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

With regard to the rose—like almost everything else in Palestine—this has been the subject of much dispute; and the anemone, because it is red, and indeed almost every other flower growing wild in the fields, except the right one, has been claimed as the rose; and one writer has gone so far as to say it could not have been the flower we know as the rose as *there are no roses in Palestine*. This must, however, be taken to mean that he had not seen any roses growing when he was there. Most tourists to Palestine visit the country during the winter or early spring months, before the roses have blossomed, and some, because they have not seen them, may have conjectured that there were none. It would be the same as if an Italian were to visit England in February, and then go back to Italy and make the statement that there are no roses in England. Very beautiful wild roses can be seen growing in rich profusion, and in various colours from white to dark red, in May, and we know, too, that in olden times roses were extensively cultivated in the plain of Sharon for the purpose of making the perfume in which all Orientals take such a delight, and of which there are some two hundred acres growing at the present time near Damascus for the same purpose, as well as, till recently, large tracts of rose fields cultivated near Zimmarin. We have frequently had the pleasure of calling the attention of friends and tourists to beautiful clusters of wild rose bushes literally covered with the fragrant flowers, and we have no doubt it was the rose that was meant.

In going through the fields of Sharon, and indeed any other cultivated land in Palestine, we notice there are no hedges to divide the various ownerships, but simply a lump



RAMLEH



A POTTER AT WORK



“ THY NEIGHBOUR’S LANDMARK ”



A PALM TREE



NATIVES OF PALESTINE



ROAD-MAKING IN PALESTINE

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of stone jutting up out of the ground as a landmark, showing the division of the property. And these simple landmarks are most scrupulously left unmolested; for to remove a neighbour's landmark would be deemed unlucky, as well as to incur the curse of God. Job, we remember, could not picture the unscrupulously wicked more vividly than by charging them with this crime. How we are taken back in thought to the prohibition of the Mosaic law: "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark, which they of old times have set up in thine inheritance in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it," and reminded also of the kindly advice of the wise man, twice repeated, not to remove the old landmark, or enter (encroach) into the fields of the fatherless.

And here are some native ploughmen preparing the ground for sowing the summer crop; most of the ploughs are drawn by oxen, and are driven without reins, the oxen being guided or urged forward by the long wooden ox-goad the ploughman carries in his hand, which, being provided with a sharp iron spike in the end, punished the cattle all the more if they kicked against it, and the meaning of this the stricken Saul well understood when he heard the voice saying, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." The ploughs are very simple, primitive affairs, being merely a clump of root with a spur, attached to a small branch of wood which serves as a handle, and by which the labourer guides with one hand the plough as it scratches the soil, for it cannot be called making a furrow. We can understand now the remark made about the man who, having once put his *hand* to the plough and looking back, is not worthy of the kingdom, for both hands are never used as in this country; and we must always understand that the Bible, in describing a scene or incident, describes the Eastern custom, not always understood amongst us.

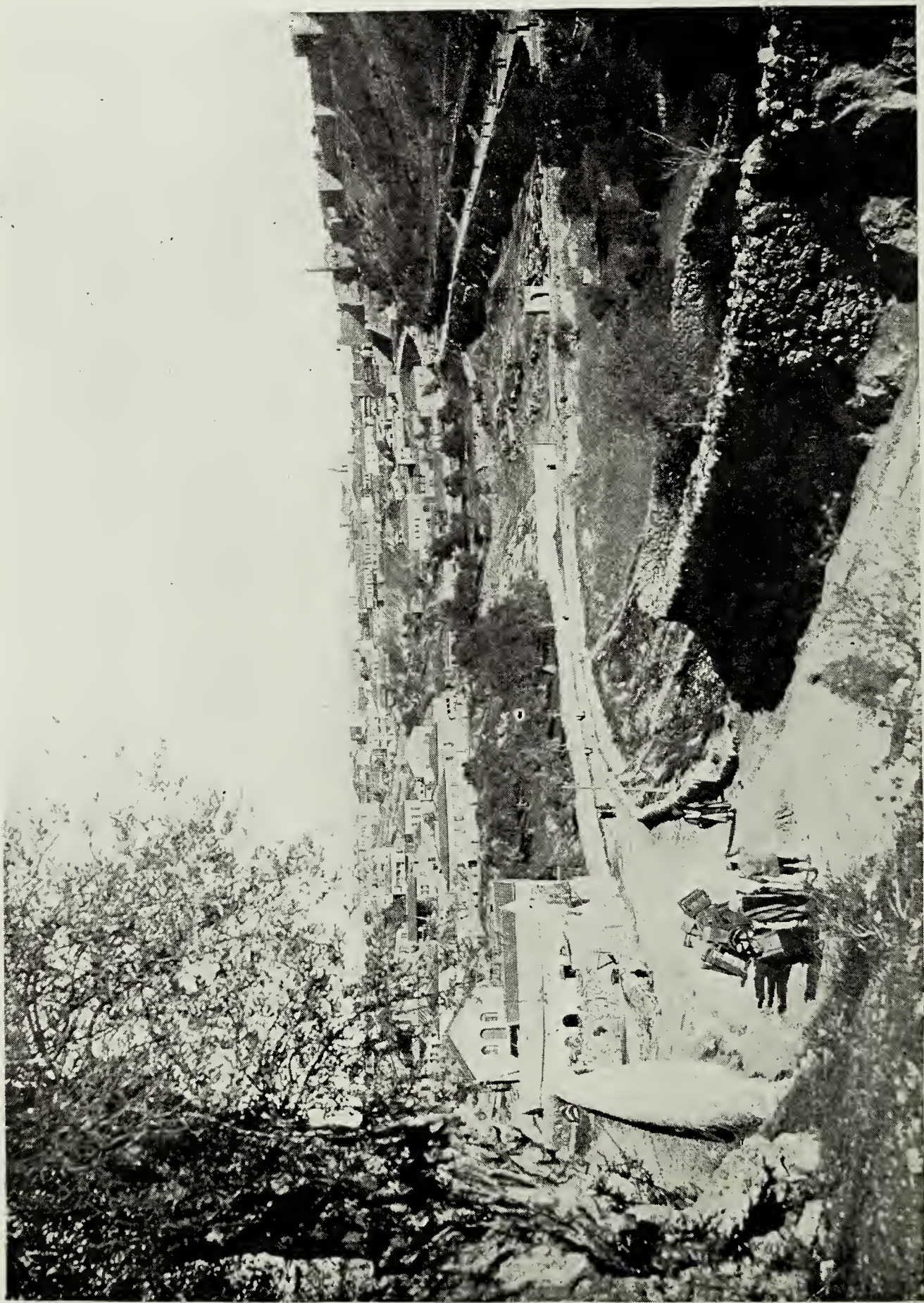
And herein lies the great advantage of making a personal visit to the Holy Land, which—almost more than anything else can do—makes the Bible very real to us. A visit to that land, and more especially a sojourn in the country,

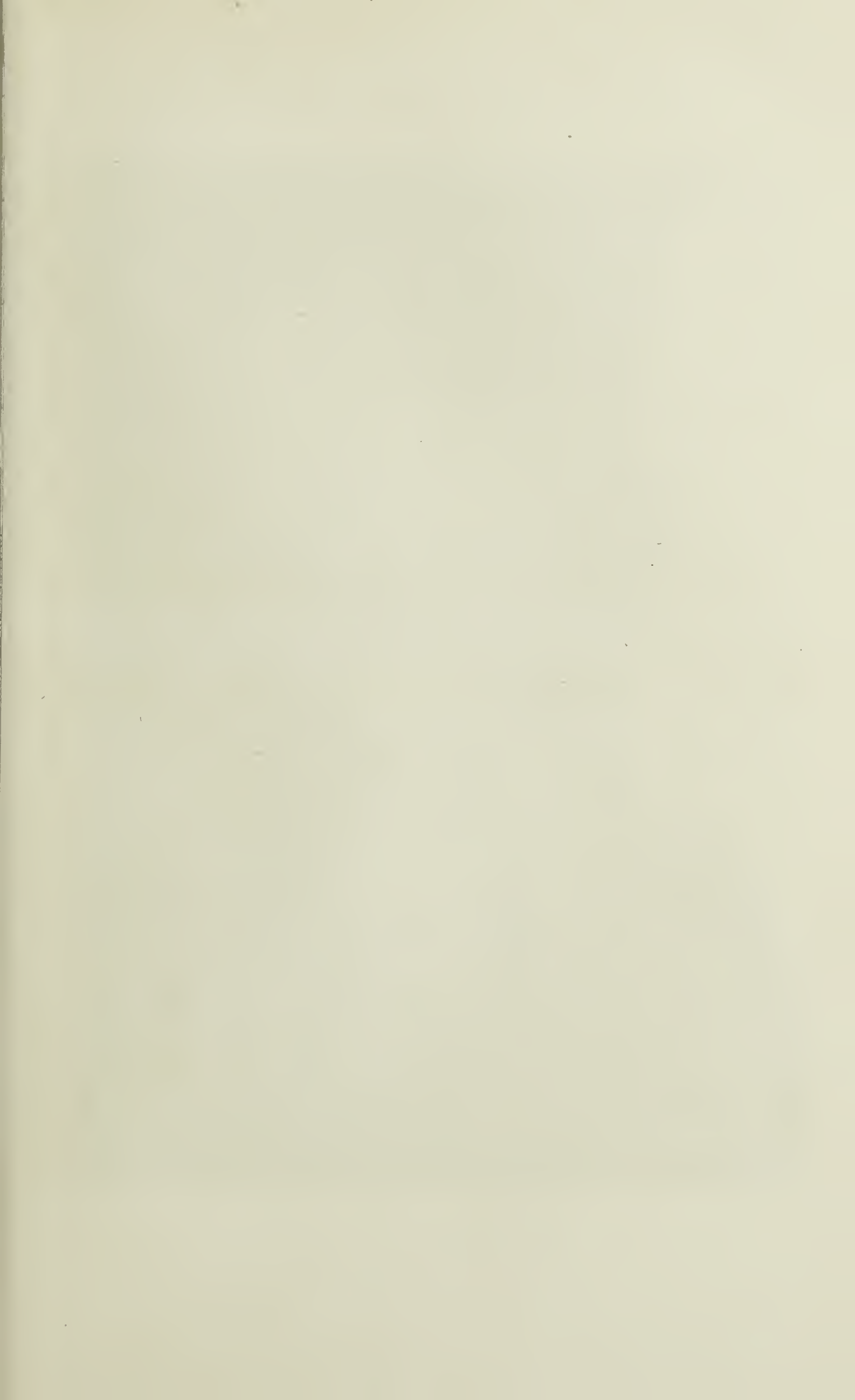
moving among its people and observing their ways, their language, their traditions and customs, enables us not only to understand better the historical associations and geographical character of the land of the Bible, but it helps us to gain a knowledge of the Oriental customs and local peculiarities which surrounded the people to whom the Scriptures were first addressed, and without which it is almost impossible to understand perfectly many of the words and phrases therein given. The Bible, we must ever remember, is an Eastern book, written first of all for Eastern people, whose modes of life, and manners and customs are widely different from our own. And nothing can be more interesting and more charming when reading the sacred pages than the illumination of its texts which such a knowledge gives. The Holy Land, in fact, may be said to be a natural commentary on the Scriptures, and as we move among its life and scenery, we get light at every turn on its constantly recurring Oriental imagery and local allusions.

Here by the roadside stands a palm tree; see how straight, how upright, how flourishing it grows. "The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree," says the Psalmist.

Here comes a woman, with a pitcher on her head; she has been to fetch water from the well; but if we could see her more closely we should see that she is tattooed on her forehead and in the palms of her hands. There are professional tattooers in every large town in Palestine, and tattooing is universal. These marks are placed there as signs to make them remember something they wish never to forget. "Behold," says Jehovah, "I have graven thee on the palms of My hands."

We see another woman; she has a necklet of small coins about the size of sixpences. We count them: there are five on each side—ten in all; ten pieces of silver, with a larger one at bottom, the size of a five-shilling piece, the same value as the ten other coins. This necklace is the ornament referred to in the parable of the ten pieces of







JAFFA GATE, JERUSALEM



SAMSON'S CAVE



KOLONIA



ENTERING THE HILL COUNTRY



BETHIER



PLAIN OF REPHAIM



GERMAN COLONY, JERUSALEM

[To face p. 22]

silver; and we know the woman who is wearing it is a married woman, for this ornament is a love-token from her husband, probably bestowed on her when she had presented him with a son; and she would on no account part with it, for it is the most treasured possession a married woman can have, and she is proud to wear it.

We may imagine, therefore, the grief of the poor woman who had lost one of the coins; not so much for the intrinsic value of the sixpence—that being its worth—as for the loss of part of her love-token, and with it the loss of prestige she would sustain. What would her envious neighbours say, and what would her husband think, that she had been so careless as to lose part of his gift? He would look at her much in the same way a husband in our country would look at his wife if he saw her going about without the wedding-ring he gave her on that happy day when she promised him her fidelity, or if he found she had lost any other trinket bestowed as a token of his love.

Again, look at that man with his loose striped cloak; we know that this is the garment that was not to be kept in pledge; it is made of camel's or goat's hair, and is very warm and waterproof; and when we remember that many of these natives have to sleep in the open air, in a country where the night dews are wet like rain, we can understand the kindly reference to this garment in the Mosaic law: "Thou shalt deliver to him his pledge when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his outer garment and bless thee."

When we see women dressed in their long, flowing blue robes, we may know exactly how Rachel and Ruth and Naomi dressed in their day, and that this is precisely the kind of garment the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, wore as she went, like the women do to-day, with her pitcher to draw water at the village well.

A man passes us riding on a donkey; donkeys, we find, are the private cabs in the East, and everybody rides them—the prince as well as the peasant, the rich as well as the poor: men, women, and children all ride on donkeys, and

no one feels it degrading to do so; so that when we read in Scripture of kings and princes, as David and Solomon, and even the Lord Jesus Himself, riding on a donkey, it is nothing to wonder at; it is, indeed, only an ordinary episode of everyday Eastern life.

And as we proceed on our journeyings through the country, we shall find, not only that many customs are preserved that were in vogue in Bible times, but that the people retain many modes of expression similar to those we find in the Scriptures. The most common form of salutation among the natives to-day is as of yore: *Es-salaam-Aleykoom* ("Peace be to you!"); and the reply would be: *Aleykoom-es-salaame* ("And to you be peace!").

A little way after leaving Ramleh, we see on the left the hill or mound which is the site of Gezer, a city which one of the later Pharaohs took from the Canaanites and gave to his daughter, Solomon's Egyptian wife, and which Solomon again rebuilt. It is here the Palestine Exploration Society have lately been pursuing their explorations, under the able direction of Mr. McAlister.

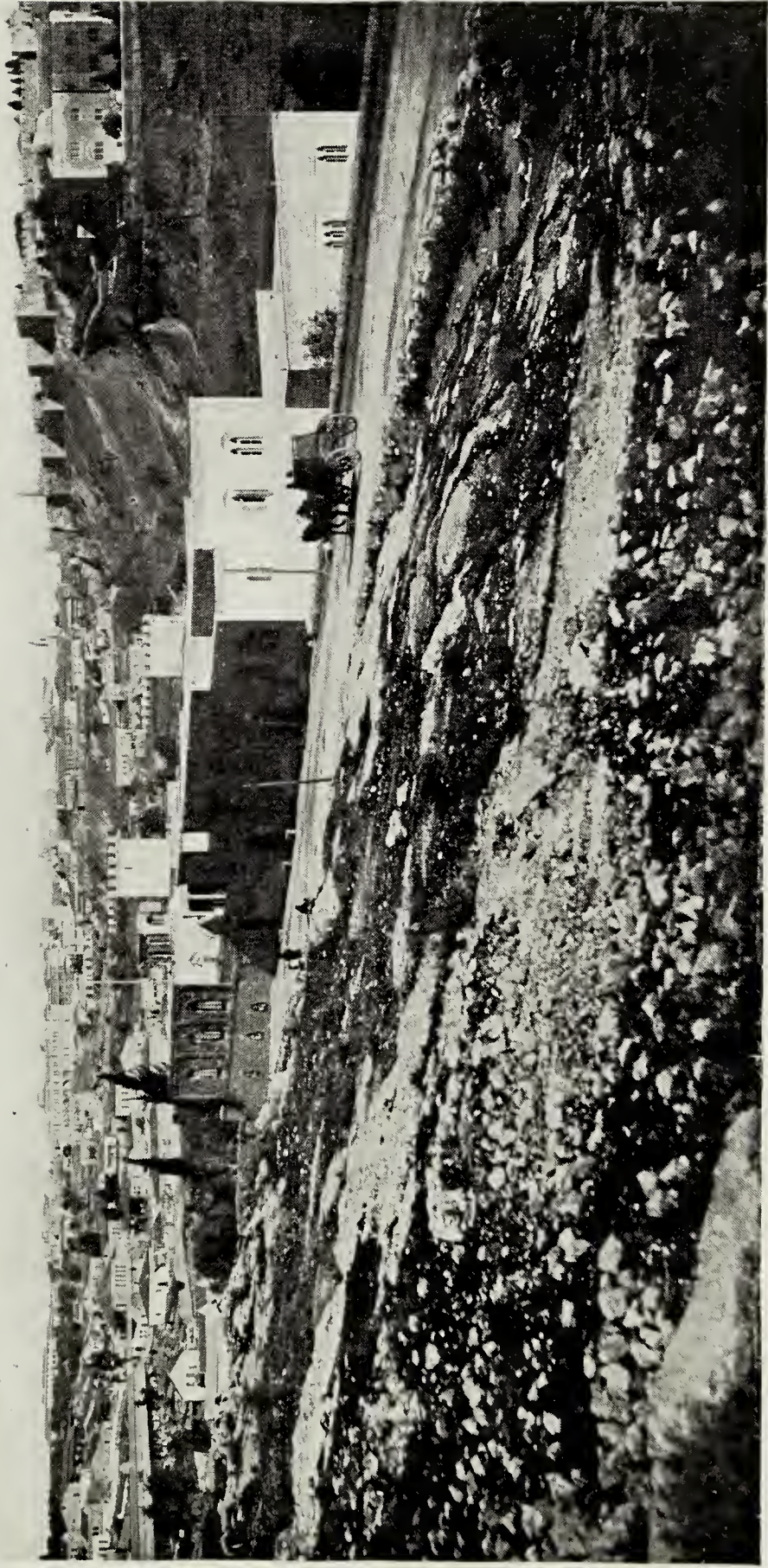
We next see the Jewish agricultural colony on the site of Ekron; it was here that all the lords of the Philistines gathered to send away the ark of God. The railway follows the same route that the cows went with the ark, passing just to the left of Beth-shemesh. "And the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh."

Opposite Dier Aban, the fourth station, we see on a hill to the left Zorah, the birthplace of Samson. The train now enters a narrow ravine, and we begin to ascend the mountains of Judah.

We see a large cave in the top of a rock to the left; this is called Samson's cave. "And he went and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam" (eagles' nest).

It takes another hour to reach the last station before Jerusalem, which is now called Bittir, and is on the site of Bether (Solomon's Song ii. 17).

The principal interest attaching to this place is that it



BRITISH OPHTHALMIC HOSPITAL, JERUSALEM

was the last stronghold of Jewish independence. It was here the last terrible battle was fought with the Romans, when, according to Josephus, eight hundred thousand persons were killed, and the valley was knee-deep in blood. Here, after a three and a half years' struggle for independence, the Jews were finally defeated, and have never since had possession of the land. The contest had been a hard one. The Jews had been maddened by the oppression of the Roman governors who had succeeded Pontius Pilate after his exile, and it was when Hadrian had rebuilt Jerusalem, and called it by a heathen name—Ælia Capitolina—forbade the Jews, under pain of death, to enter it, and decreed the extinction of Judaism, that they could restrain themselves no longer, but rose in formidable revolt under the leadership of Bar-Cochba, the "son of a star," the false messiah. The Jews fought fiercely, and it seemed at one time that they would succeed in throwing off the Roman rule; and the hard-pressed general sent to Rome for reinforcements, stating that he could only stand on the defensive, and could not hold out much longer.

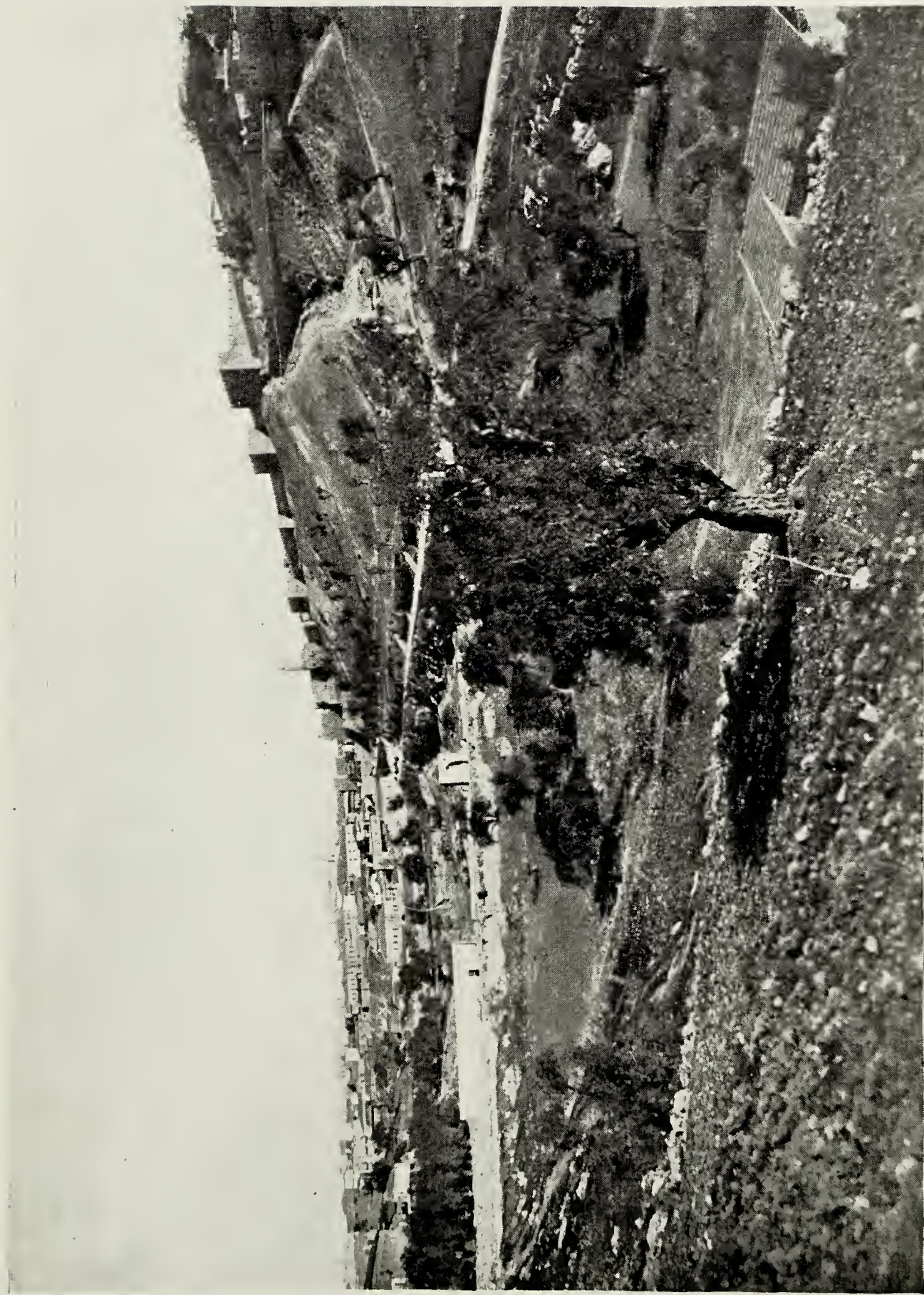
Hadrian, the emperor, hastily sent for his ablest general, Septimus Severus, who was then in Britain, to come to their relief. Severus collected a scratch army from among the natives of this country, and with these soldiers arrived just in time to save the Roman legions from being overwhelmed. The Jews have a tradition that the same nation which caused them to lose their independence will be the means of their regaining it, and it is a tradition to which they cling.

We now enter the valley of roses, where there are some fertile gardens; then we cross part of the plain of Rephaim, or giants, where David fought with and defeated the Philistines; the signal for David's commencing the battle being "the sound of a going in the mulberry trees," and it is interesting to note that mulberry trees still flourish here.

The pretty house we see on the hill-side on the left is the well-conducted hospital for lepers; and the charming stone-built houses and tiled-roofed modern-looking houses we

come to a little farther on, as the train slows down, and which come on us here as a surprise, are the residences of the sister German Temple colony to that we saw at Jaffa; and just beyond these, twenty-five minutes after leaving Bether, we draw up at the Jerusalem station, where we find carriages are in waiting to convey us to our hotels. The carriages, upon leaving the station, quickly turn to the left, in the main Bethlehem road. The large building we see on our right is the British Ophthalmic Hospital; just beyond which, also on our right, is the valley of Hinnom. We now descend to where the road crosses a dam in the valley, which we pass over, and which forms the ancient boundary between Benjamin and Judah. The buildings high up to our right on Mount Zion are Bishop Gobat's School, the tomb of David, and the new German Catholic church; on our left is the large pool of the Sultan, sometimes called Lower Pool of Gihon, above which are the almshouses built by Sir Moses Montefiore for poor Jews; the ruin is the ancient church of St. George. We now sharply ascend to the city walls and the Jaffa gate, near which we find our hotel.

Those who go by the road to Jerusalem leave the direction of the railway soon after Ramleh is passed, and cross the valley of Ajalon, where Joshua obtained his great victory over the five kings of the Canaanites, when "the sun stood still, and the moon stayed." The difficulty as to the sun and the moon being stayed in their courses has been a burden to the faith of many, and, we fear, has been used as a weapon by atheists to undermine belief in the Bible; but all difficulty is dispelled if we realise that the Bible must be read as an Eastern book, and the sooner we are led to enter into the poetry of its spirit, the closer we shall come to the truth of its narratives. We read, for instance, that in the conflict between Barak and Sisera on Mount Tabor, that "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera." But does any one understand that the Bible intends to convey the idea that that battle was won by planetary impulses? We learn that the Jews had been groaning



MOUNT ZION, JERUSALEM



A PEASANT WOMAN



THE " OUTER GARMENT "



WOMAN WITH THE TEN PIECES
OF SILVER



WOMAN WITH FLOWING ROBES



MAN RIDING DONKEY



EXCAVATIONS AT GEZER

[To face p. 20]

under the tyranny of Jabin, king of Jerusalem; but Deborah arose, and she aroused Barak; Barak routed the army of Sisera, and Jael completed Barak's work by killing Sisera in her tent.

That is the story as a matter of history; that is the account as rendered by the historian. But now the poetess appears, and in the figurative language of the East sings: "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera."

And so, with the account of the great battle on Beth-horon, the first part of the tenth chapter of Joshua up to the twelfth verse gives the historical account: it tells how, when the five kings of Canaan besieged Gibeon, the Gibeonites sent to Joshua to come up and help them. Joshua came in haste with his hosts; a panic seized the enemy, and they fled up the hill of Beth-horon. Joshua, not content with simply raising the siege, followed; when he came to the summit of the hill he could see them fleeing down the other side, and felt they were escaping from him. A great hailstorm came up, and a thick darkness was blotting out the sky; it seemed as if the night was coming on too soon. Joshua fears his victory will be incomplete, and he cries in anguish for more daylight: "Sun, stand thou still; O moon, be thou stayed; do not let night pluck the victory from my hands." And the storm passed over, and the darkness lifted, and Joshua routed those armies. That is the historical fact. Then the victory is put into the language of poetry; the old war song of the Book of Jasher is taken up, and in that poetry we can look into the heart of Joshua and the joy of his warriors as they returned to their camp at Gilgal.

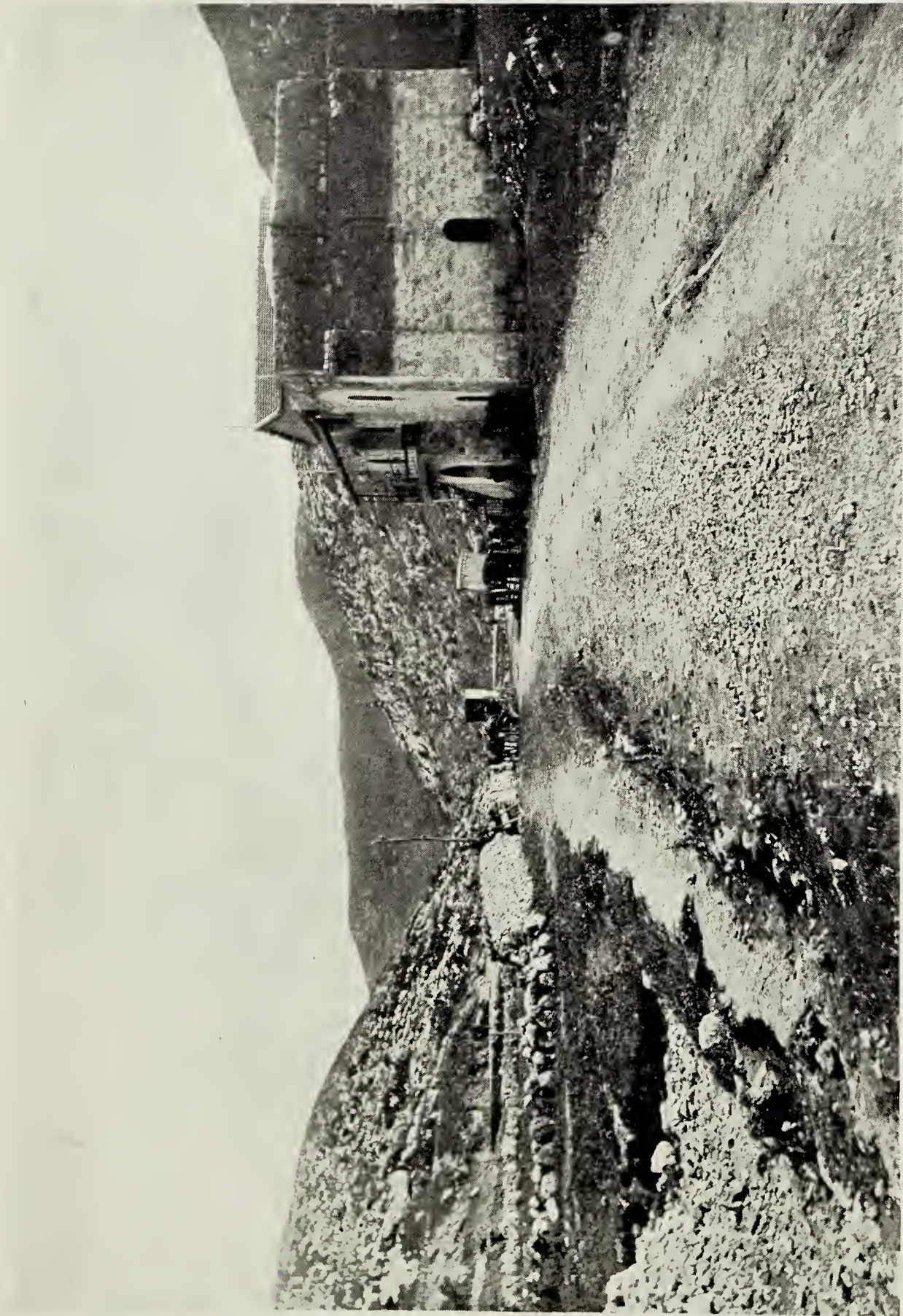
If the reader will look into the revised version of the Old Testament, he will not fail to notice that from the twelfth to the fifteenth verses they are marked as a quotation of poetry, a poetical quotation introduced as a climax to the historian's description of the great battle and victory.

Leaving behind us the mud-built village of Latroon, the traditional home of the penitent thief, where there is now an extensive establishment of Trappist monks, we see to

the left of the road, the small village of Amwas, thought at one time, from a similarity of name, to be the Emmaus of the New Testament; but as the distance from Jerusalem does not correspond with that mentioned, the contention has been abandoned in favour of Kubibeh. We next pass through the Bab-el Wady glen and enter the hill country. It is a sharp ascent, and we understand how "the strength of the hills" was a defence against the Philistine hosts, who, possessing the coast-lands, frequently came up to war against the Israelites. The road turns a curve on reaching the summit, and we begin to descend the Wâdy Beit Hanîna; a very picturesque village now soon comes into view on our right, called Abu-Ghosh, so called from a notorious robber chief of the same name who once resided here and levied blackmail on all passers-by. The place has been identified as the ancient Kirjath-jearim, where the ark of God remained for twenty years in the house of Abinadab, until David, having heard of it, came and rescued the sacred treasure, and took it away with great rejoicing.

The bed of the *wady*, or glen, farther on contains the hamlet of Kolonia, once a Roman colony; where there is now a wayside inn, or rest-house; leaving this, the road again ascends, and we soon pass on our left the village of Lifta, snugly nestling in a valley beneath the road, whose inhabitants bear a bad reputation for their plundering propensities.

Shortly after leaving Lifta, the red-tiled roofs of handsome-looking buildings come in sight—hospitals, asylums, convents, schools, consulates, and churches; all modern buildings, forming the western suburb of Jerusalem, and giving a disappointing first impression of the place we have come so far to see.



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BAB-EL-WADY

CHAPTER III

JERUSALEM AND THE MOUNT OF OLIVES

WHETHER we go by rail or road to Jerusalem, the city is entered on its western side, where there is little of beauty to attract the visitor's attention; and to many their first view of Jerusalem is somewhat disappointing.

It is, however, a city so "compact together" that it takes but a short time to walk round its walls and through the valley of the Kidron to the Mount of Olives, from which point of vantage the view of the city is quite overwhelming. Standing in a position perfectly unique, on the brow of a hill, and apparently surrounded on all sides by deep rugged valleys, it enjoys a situation so strikingly beautiful that it is impossible to describe it, and many a strong man has stood and wept as he gazed for the first time on the glorious spectacle.

Many stirring events have happened here since David planned his magnificent temple, and the temple itself has long since disappeared, but the situation must be much the same; and we can well enter into the feelings of the Psalmist King, who in a rapture of joy described it as being "beautiful for situation and the joy of the whole earth." And we can understand how he pined for his beloved city when, as an exile and being driven like a partridge over the mountains, in plaintive strains he sang: "Let my right hand forget her cunning if I forget thee, O Jerusalem! Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember thee above my chief joy."

We can well sympathise with the patriotic emotions of the captive Jews who sat beside the Babylonian streams and wept as they remembered Zion.

What Jerusalem was like when in the zenith of its splendour can scarcely be conceived, but from what still

remains we cannot wonder that the disciples should have called the attention of the Master to the architecture around: "Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here."

It was over this city that the great Sympathiser of humanity wept as He foresaw its doom, crying in words of the tenderest anguish: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Through all the ages past Jerusalem has been regarded as a type of Heaven, and we in our days are accustomed to speak of the city to which our souls aspire as the Heavenly Jerusalem.

Standing near the summit of the Mount of Olives we get a good idea of the topography of the city. Immediately at our feet is the valley of the Kidron, or, as it is sometimes called, the valley of Jehoshaphat. On our right is the valley, or garden, of nuts, and beyond this Mount Scopus, on which the Roman legions under Titus encamped when he besieged Jerusalem.

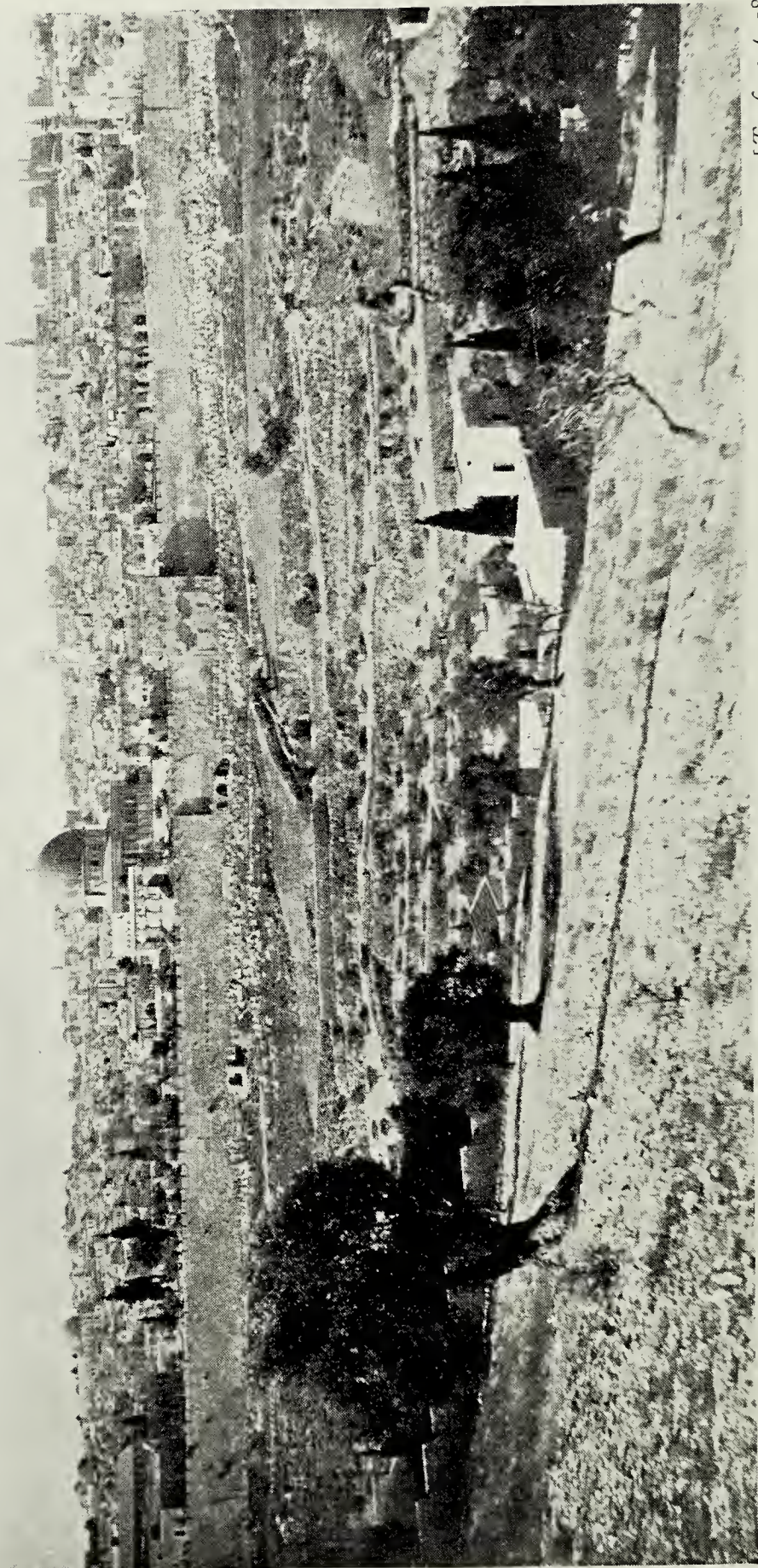
On our left we see the Hill of Offence, where Solomon built places for the idolatrous worship of his heathen wives. At the bottom of the Mount of Olives, immediately below us, within the walled-in enclosure of one-third of an acre, is the garden of Gethsemane, and almost close to this, on the opposite side of the road, the so-called tomb of the Virgin.

On the opposite side of the valley rises the hill of Moriah, on which, in its sacred enclosure of thirty-five acres, stands the mosque of Omar, or, more correctly, the Dome of the Rock, built almost on the site of Solomon's temple.

At the extreme left of the temple area stands the mosque of El-Aksa, originally a Christian church built by Justinian. On the opposite angle of the temple area, to the right, stands the Turkish barracks (on the site of Pilate's judgment hall) and castle of Antonia. The church just



NORTH WALL OF JERUSALEM



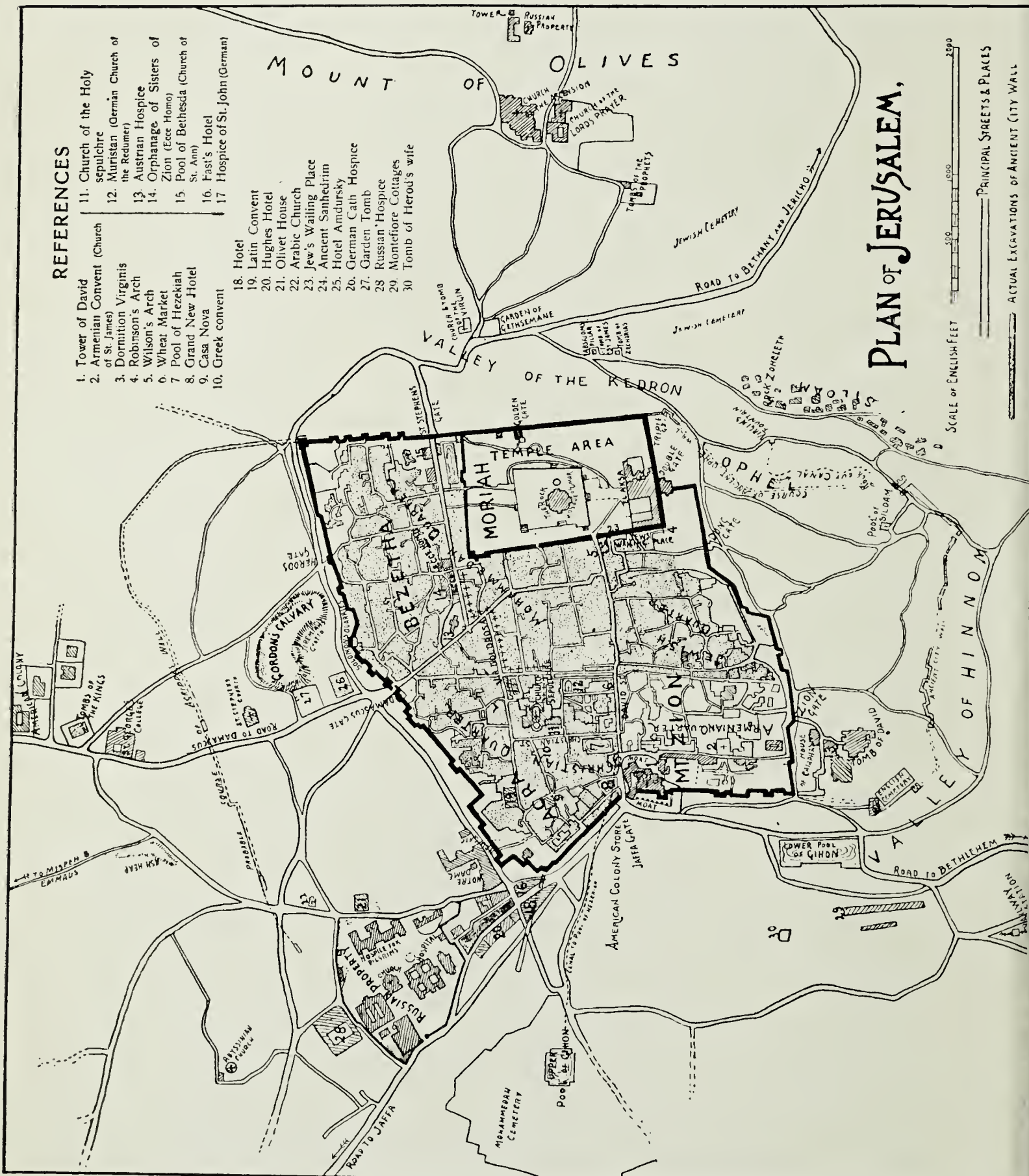
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JERUSALEM FROM MOUNT OF OLIVES

REFERENCES

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Tower of David | 11. Church of the Holy Sepulchre |
| 2. Armenian Convent (Church of St. James) | 12. Muristan (German Church of the Redemption) |
| 3. Dormition Virginis | 13. Austrian Hospice |
| 4. Robinson's Arch | 14. Orphanage of Sisters of Zion (Ecce Homo) |
| 5. Wilson's Arch | 15. Pool of Bethesda (Church of St. Ann) |
| 6. Wheat Market | 16. Fast's Hotel |
| 7. Pool of Hezekiah | 17. Hospice of St. John (German) |
| 8. Grand New Hotel | |
| 9. Casa Nova | |
| 10. Greek convent | |
| 18. Hotel | |
| 19. Latin Convent | |
| 20. Hughes Hotel | |
| 21. Olivet House | |
| 22. Arabic Church | |
| 23. Jew's Walling Place | |
| 24. Ancient Sanhedrim | |
| 25. Hotel Amdursky | |
| 26. German Cath. Hospice | |
| 27. Garden Tomb | |
| 28. Russian Hospice | |
| 29. Montefiore Cottages | |
| 30. Tomb of Herod's wife | |

PLAN OF JERUSALEM,



outside the walls of the temple area, to the right, is the Church of St. Anne, and the gateway in the city wall near it is the St. Stephen's Gate. The Church of St. Anne was offered by the Sultan of Turkey on the conclusion of the Crimean War to the British nation, and was foolishly declined by the government of that day, when it was given to the French. It proved a most valuable site, and contains in its grounds what is believed by some to be the pool of Bethesda. Looking northward, on the rising ground we see the hill, or rock, of Bezetha, and opposite to this, just outside the walls, a rocky mound some sixty feet high, from which point of vantage the soldiers of Titus effected a breach in the walls, and took the city. By many this hill is believed to be Calvary, and this is a question which will come under our consideration later on.

At the north-west corner of the city is the hill of Acra, which is the Christian quarter, and is generally covered with the huge buildings of the Greek and Latin Churches.

The opposite quarter to this, on the south-west, the highest point of the city, is Mount Zion, mostly covered by the immense buildings belonging to the Armenians, comprising the Church of St. James—the first bishop, it is claimed, of Jerusalem—with its clustering adjuncts; and rising above these we see the massive towers of Hippicus and David, the present Citadel of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem stands on four hills, just as Rome stands on its seven hills; and formerly there were deep valleys between these hills, which are now, however, much filled up with the rubbish of ages. Across one of these valleys—the Tyropean, which lies between Mount Moriah and Mount Zion—a large bridge formerly spanned the abyss, giving more convenient access between the two places; and the spring of one of the arches of this bridge can still be seen near the Jews' wailing-place, called, from its discoverer, Robinson's Arch.

There is no doubt that the south wall once embraced a much wider area than it does now. It probably at one time extended through the grounds of Bishop Gobat's

School on Mount Zion, which is now some distance outside the walls, and from there went down to the pool of Siloam, near the valley of Hinnom.

On the summit of the Mount of Olives, behind us, stands a mosque where, according to Moslem tradition, the Ascension took place, and a footprint is shown to the credulous as the place where Jesus stood just before ascending to the clouds; and not far from this is the Church of the Lord's Prayer, owned by the Latins, as the Roman Catholic Church is here called, to distinguish it from the Eastern, or Greek, Church; it is built on the spot where tradition avers the Lord gave His prayer to the disciples, when they said: "Lord, teach us to pray." Nothing, however, it may be said here, is more unsatisfactory than Catholic tradition, for when Christianity became a state religion under Constantine, a lot of sites had to be found or invented to show where everything as recorded in the Gospels took place. Around the walls of the corridors which surround the courtyard over thirty tablets, containing the prayer in as many languages, are seen; and on one of the sides, in a niche of the wall of the corridor, is a beautiful monument to the memory of the foundress of the church, the Princess Latour d'Auvergne, a cousin of the emperor Napoleon III.

About a mile beyond the summit of Olivet, on its eastern slope, nestles the village of Bethany, which, with all the other places we have mentioned, we shall notice in greater details on our rambles in and around the Holy City.

Over the Mount of Olives three paths lead, and probably always led, to Bethany; rough paths they are, stony and steep; the Saviour, in His frequent visits to His friends Lazarus and his sisters, must often have traversed them all, and it was in returning upon one of these that He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. In descending the centre path, which is the shortest, we come to an old ruin dating from crusading times, and which, according to the legend, is built over the spot where the Saviour beheld the city and wept over it. Independently of any



MOSQUE OF ASCENSION



CHURCH OF LORD'S PRAYER



COURTYARD OF CHURCH OF LORD'S
PRAYER



CLOISTERS OF CHURCH OF LORD'S PRAYER



CLOISTERS OF CHURCH OF LORD'S
PRAYER



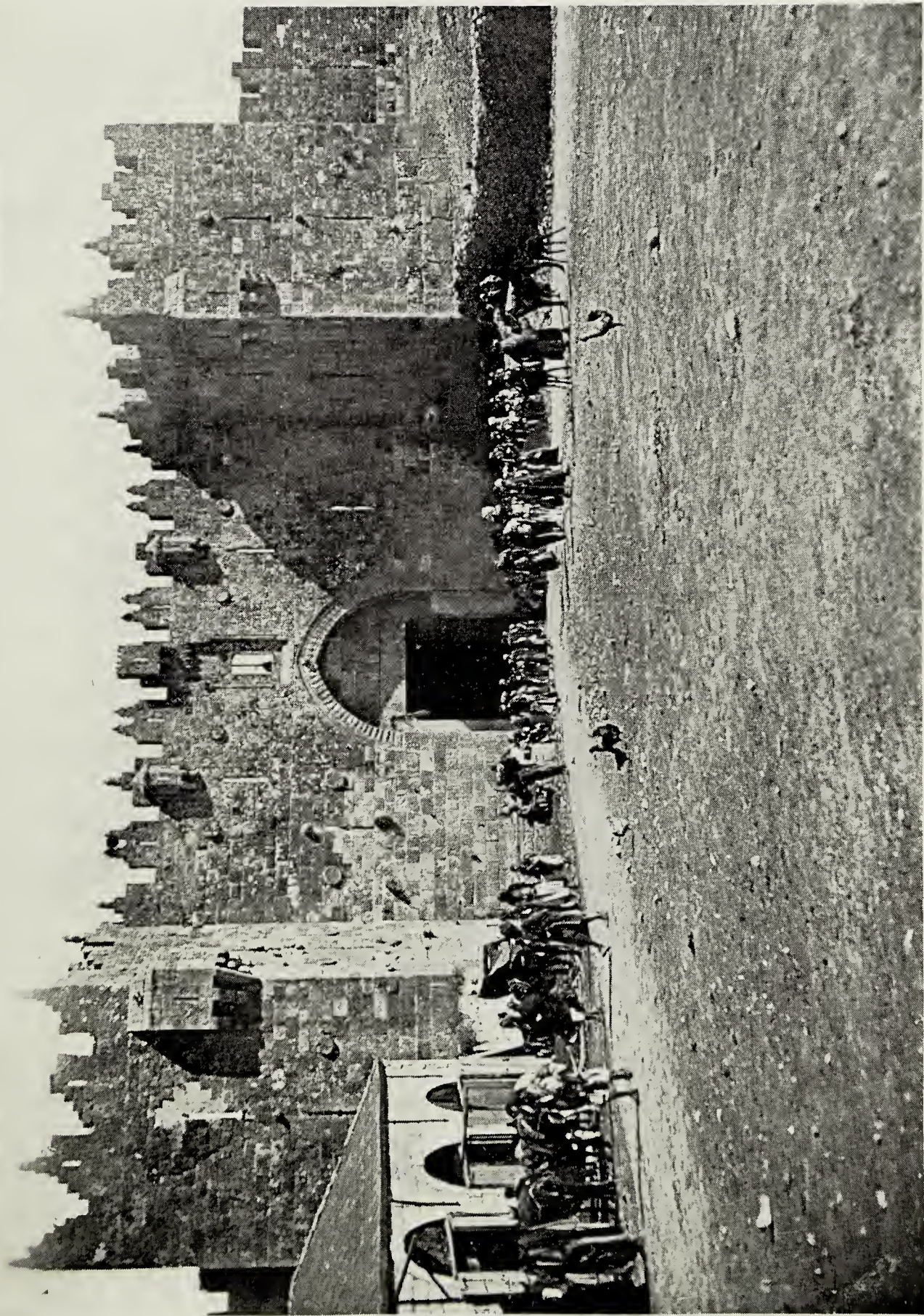
HILL OF OFFENCE

[To face p. 30]



[To face p. 32

EAST WALL OF JERUSALEM



THE DAMASCUS GATEWAY

[To face p. 32

tradition, one cannot but think that this may well have been the place, for from this spot we get the most beautiful view over the whole city. In descending from the summit by this path, it winds round the brow of the hill-side, and at this spot the whole city suddenly bursts upon the view.

On the opposite side of this path the Latins have erected a church to commemorate the same incident; a tablet over the doorway leading to the grounds records the event (Luke xix. 41). In these grounds the heart of the late Marquis of Bute lies buried under a cypress tree.

Reader, if you ever go to Jerusalem, try to go up to that spot alone, walk round the face of the ruin, and take a seat on the grassy bank beneath the wall; there sit and gaze on the view before you, and as you gaze on that scene I trow you will begin to feel your heart glow and throb and burn within you, and that you will experience a thrill of soul-joy you never felt before.

How often, in reading about Jerusalem and in studying accounts of the researches of explorers (how that they have dug to trace its ancient walls), you may have come to think of Jerusalem as a dead and buried city, a city like Pompeii, or Corinth, or Carthage—a city of the past; and a city of the past it is—a buried city, if you like; but, Phœnix-like, it has arisen from its ruins, and you may from here realise, as you have never done before, that it is an everlasting city, a city ever living and ever beautiful: the City of Jehovah; the City of the Great King; the City of God.

CHAPTER IV

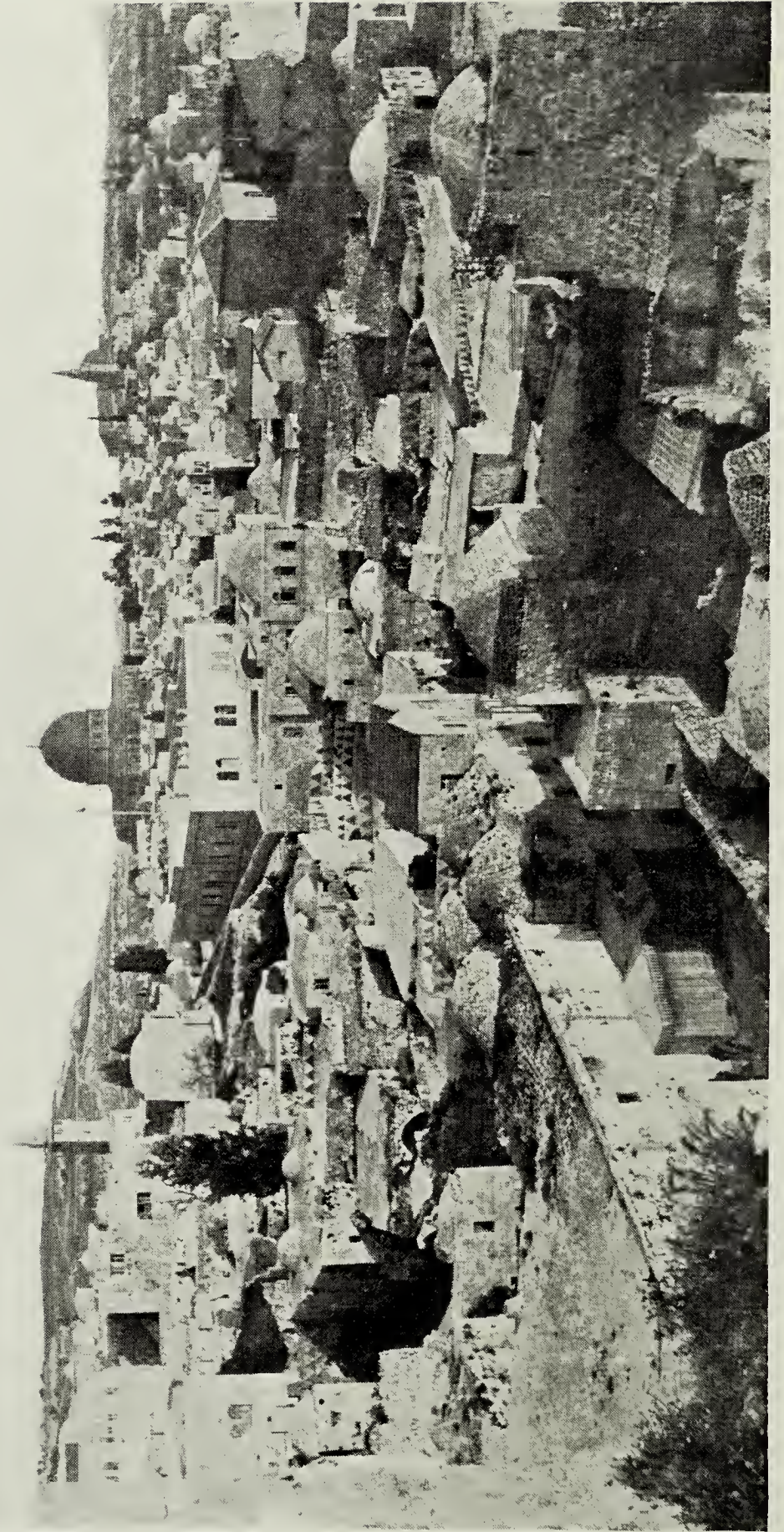
ROUND THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM

MOST of the hotels are situated near the Jaffa gate, two inside the walls, and the others a short distance away outside. From either of the latter, one may turn down the road, which cuts at right angles with the main road from Jaffa, up by the entrance of the Hotel Kaminitz, and on between the huge convent building of the Notre Dame and the Church of Perpetual Prayer, where, as its name indicates, there are always, day and night, relays of white-robed nuns praying; just beyond this we come to the first opening in the walls, called the New Gate, this having only been made within the last few years to give access to the city and Church of the Holy Sepulchre, for the convenience of pilgrims.

Around this gateway are shops and factories for the manufacture and sale of souvenirs usually purchased by the pilgrims during the season of the pilgrimages. From here right round to the Jaffa gateway numerous houses and shops are built against the walls, almost hiding them from view, and there is evidence that in the direction of the Damascus gateway the same will soon be the case.

About five minutes' walk will bring us to the Damascus Gate, one of the busiest and the most beautiful of all the ancient gateways. This gate is built on the top of an older gate, the crown of the arch of which can be seen inside.

Excavations show that there has always been a gateway at this spot. Although now called the Damascus Gate, because it is on the road leading towards Damascus, it was until two hundred years ago called St. Stephen's Gate; and a little to the north there is a beautiful new Franciscan



JERUSALEM FROM DAMASCUS GATE



“ GOLGOTHA, THE PLACE OF A SKULL ”



OLD OLIVE TREES, GETHSEMANE



TOMB OF ABSALOM

[To face p. 46

church, called St. Stephen's Church, which has been built on the foundations, and on the same ground plan of an older St. Stephen's Church which in the early ages was erected here to the memory of the first martyr, who was stoned near by. The Arabs, however, call the gate by the still older name of the Columns, because in Herod's time a street ran through the city from this point to where Zion Gate now stands, and on each side of this road stood rows of columns. A few fragments of these columns still remain. Inside this gateway are some rough steps, up which access may be had to the top of the walls, from which a fine view over the city, showing the mosque of Omar and the distant mountains of Moab, may be obtained. Returning to the road outside, we notice the very fine stone-built new German Catholic college just opposite. From here, eastward, the walls are disclosed; there are signs, however, that this will not be so for long, as the strip of land between the road and the wall has in some way been secured by speculators, of whom there are plenty even in the Holy City.

The road opposite the Damascus gateway leads to St. George's Church and the English bishop's residence. A few paces eastward is the entrance under the wall to what are known as Solomon's quarries—the quarries from which it is believed some of the stone was obtained for the building of the temple.

The quarry extends under the city for some two hundred yards, and lights and a guide are necessary to explore the cavern. It has the appearance of work being suddenly stopped; there are half-hewn stones left unfinished, and niches in the sides of the walls which contained the candles or torches of the workmen, and blackened roofs, as on the day the work was left. Masonic meetings are frequently held in this cavern, as Solomon is claimed to be the founder of the Masonic order.

The road now passes through a kind of cutting which may have been made by some early monarch to get stone for building, and at the same time secure the defence of

the city. On one side is the rock or hill of Bezetha, and on the opposite side the rocky eminence called Gordon's Calvary, with the cave beneath known as Jeremiah's Grotto, so called from the tradition that he lived in this cave when he wrote his Lamentations.

The hill over the cave, which is known as the New Calvary, is about sixty feet high from the present ground-level, and is of peculiar interest, as by many it is believed to be none other than the place where the Lord was crucified. As long ago as 1846, Robinson, one of the pioneers of modern discovery in Bible lands, and who gave great attention to the identification of Biblical sites, was one of the first who argued that the Holy Sepulchre of received tradition could not possibly have been the place of the Crucifixion.

Other explorers following in his wake, from the learned German savant, Otto Thenius, to Colonel Condor, have shown pretty conclusively the topographical impossibility of this site conforming to the Gospel account of the scene of the great event. The principal argument relied on in favour of the Holy Sepulchre being the site is the venerable antiquity of the tradition, and it is often asked: Why was the Church of the Holy Sepulchre built at all, if it is not over the actual site of Calvary? We must remember the recorded circumstances under which it was founded; how that Helena, the mother of Constantine, who undertook the journey to Palestine in her old age in order to find the sacred places, was directed by a dream to this spot; that she found buried in a cave here three crosses, and, being uncertain which of these was the one which bore the Saviour, she directed that each of them should touch a man who was ill, and that one of them immediately restored him to perfect health.

Alternate accounts say it was a dead body restored to life, and it is upon this tissue of fable and imposture that the argument in favour of the traditional site rests. It has been proved that these legends are unknown to authentic history; and the most plausible reason for the building

being erected here is, as pointed out by the learned Hanauer: "That it was first of all erected here as a memorial church of the event, and that in the course of ages it has come to be regarded as the actual site."

One of the reasons that the hill outside the Damascus gate is the most likely spot is the fact that, viewed from one point from the road or from the walls, the face of the cliff presents the appearance of a rotting skull. Our photograph of this, on the opposite page, which is entirely untouched, gives a representation of this which cannot be mistaken. The place was called Golgotha, which is the Aramaic word—Calvaria the Latin—both of which words, translated, mean a skull. The writer has walked around and about Jerusalem hundreds of times, and he defies any one with the Bible in his hand to find any other place about the city answering to the Gospel account of the place so well as this.

The hill is called by the Jews "Beth-has-Sekilah," or place of stoning, and there are many reasons to show that this was the place of execution.

The method of stoning, which was the Jewish form of execution, is clearly described in the Talmud, which gives the name of the place as Beth-has Sekilah, and describes a precipice there. Of course, Christ was executed according to the Roman method of that time, which was crucifixion, but there is no reason to believe that there were two places of execution.

The reason it is known as Gordon's Calvary is very simple. After General Gordon had quitted China subsequent to his quelling of the Taiping rebellion, he was for some little time out of commission, and he resolved to spend a holiday in the Holy Land. For a short time he resided at Ain Karim, where he studied the literature of the country, and became interested in the question that was then keenly occupying the attention of archæologists, viz. the true site of Calvary. He was so impressed with the arguments in favour of what was called the new site that he determined to inquire into the matter for himself.

Accordingly he had a tent fixed on the hill, where he was close at hand for the purpose, and after investigating the problem he felt quite satisfied that this was the most probable place—but for one difficulty: if this were Calvary, there must be a tomb near, for “in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new tomb wherein man was never yet laid.”

At the foot of the hill, to the west, there was a garden belonging to a Greek, and Gordon conjectured that in that garden a tomb might possibly be found. He set some natives to work to clear away a lot of accumulated débris at a spot he thought would be the most likely place, and on digging about five feet below the surface he was delighted in finding the entrance to a tomb which not only fulfils all the conditions of the Gospel narrative, but seems also in itself a vindication of the truth of the story, as in many points it throws light on some by-passages, and renders intelligible the circumstances of our Lord's burial. Gordon left the entrance to the tomb as shown in the accompanying photograph—the first ever taken after it was opened—being entirely satisfied that the only condition wanting was here at hand.

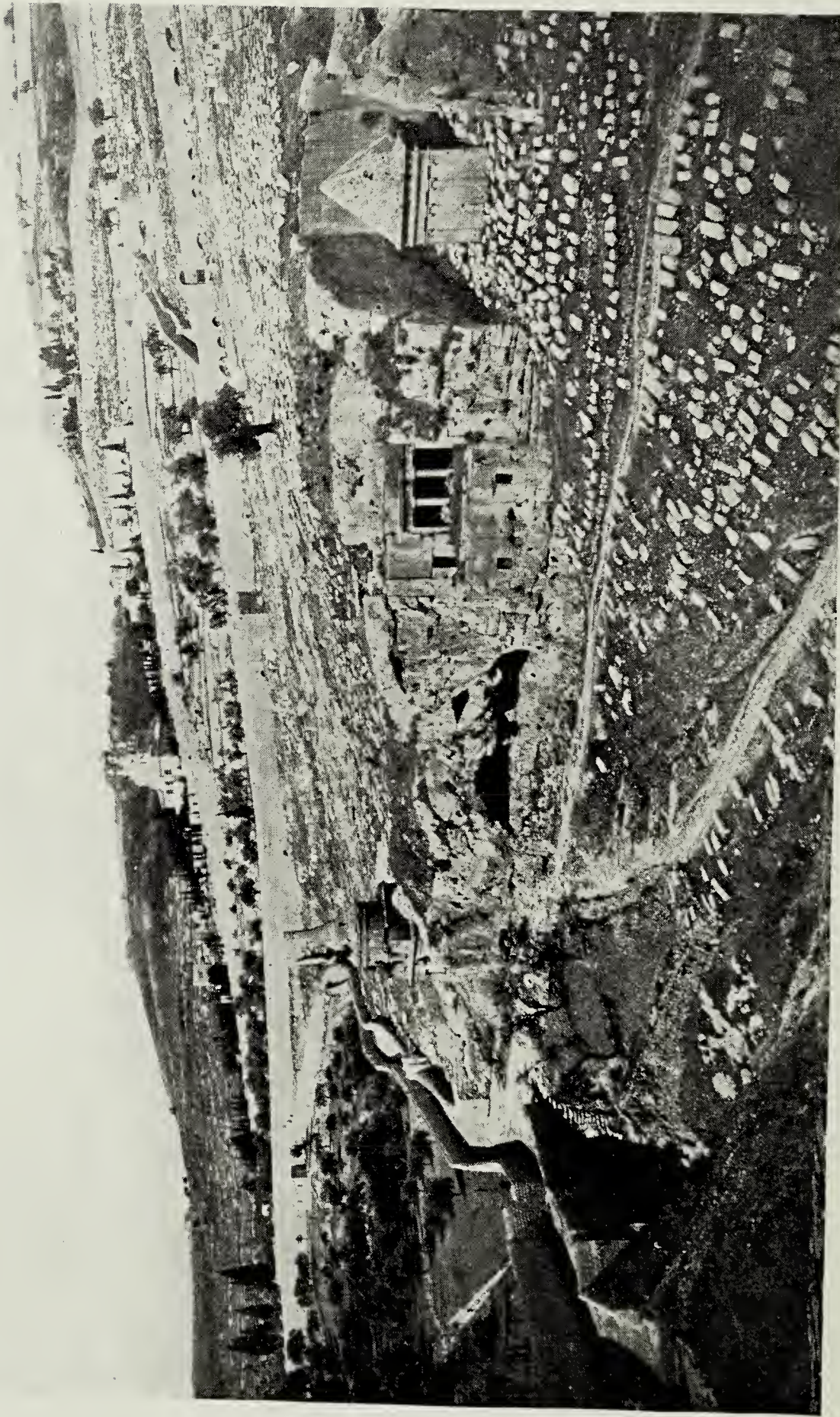
That is the only connection of Gordon with the hill, and why it has got to be called by his name. Further excavations were subsequently made around the tomb chamber, mention of which, with a description of the tomb, must be reserved for a future chapter.

The road now descends, and in the wall opposite the cross-road coming from it we see a small and very inferior gateway; this is called Herod's Gate, but by the natives it is known as “Haret-Bab es-Sahireh,” or Gate of Flowers. We see, a little way to the north, a large tree; this is known as the Crusaders' tree, from the legend that it was planted here by Crusaders when they encamped at the spot; then a little farther on, on the left, a beautiful olive-grove is seen, many of the trees being computed to be a thousand years old; and a little farther on, on the right, we come to the north-east angle of the city wall.



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MOUNT SCOPUS



VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT

The rising landscape cutting the distant horizon on the left is Mount Scopus, one of the many hills that are "round about Jerusalem." It will now be more interesting if, instead of closely following the wall on the east, we pass down the new road towards the valley of Jehoshaphat. We soon get a fine view of the Mount of Olives, on the western slope of which we notice some huge quarries for blocks of limestone, which forms the structure of the mountain; and, as everywhere else outside the city, there are rock tombs, which are here being destroyed.

On our right, between the road and the wall, is a Moslem cemetery, and on either side of this road we cannot fail to notice blind beggars sitting by the wayside, crying, as in days of yore: "Have mercy on me." One old eyeless woman has been sitting here every season for forty years, and yet she will tell you, in answer to your inquiry as to her age, that she is twenty-seven years old—a figure she evidently cannot get beyond. Others are cripples, and several are impostors, who, finding that during the pilgrimage season some of the poor helpless creatures are making a good thing by their begging for the time being, disguise themselves in dirty rags, and reap their share. One man, dressed in the meanest rags, lies prostrate on the ground, and simulates a palsied shake. He never asks for anything; no, he is too far gone for that, you think, and he looks so deplorable that you cannot, however hard-hearted you may be, withhold from him your pity. But turn the corner, and then for a moment step back and look; if no one else is coming in sight, he will sit up quite nimbly and light his pipe. At the close of the season he retires to his village, where he owns several houses, and rides a fine horse.

Three years ago his daughter was married with great ceremony, and he gave her a dower equal to twelve hundred pounds. "What is the matter with you?" a tourist asked him once, seeing he was not what he represented himself to be. "Nothing," he replied candidly. "Then why do you not work, instead of lying here

begging?" "Ah! God never intended me for work," was the answer, "and I don't like it."

The road which turns sharply up the hill to the right leads to what is now known as St. Stephen's Gate—a modern name applied to the gateway here. Near the bottom of the road, just before it turns to the left over the Kidron valley, a flat piece of rock is seen on the right, on which pilgrims may often be seen kneeling and passionately kissing the stone. They are told that this is the place where Stephen was stoned, although there is no authority for the statement, except a very late tradition. Still, it is a holy place, and although it is a most improbable site, yet the holy places have to be multiplied to every possible extent, and therefore this is too good a one to be lost sight of; and the more there are, the more the credulity of the pilgrims is worked upon, the more are the fees that are extracted from them.

We now turn towards Olivet, and here cross the bridge of the brook Kidron, as it is still called, although there is rarely any water to be seen in it, except during heavy rains, as it is filled up many feet with the *débris* of ages, and the water soon soaks away. On the left is now seen the façade of an interesting building, the Tomb of the Virgin, this being the spot where tradition locates her burial and assumption. It is one of the most perfectly preserved of the buildings of crusading times, and was built by order of Queen Millicent, wife of the fourth crusading king of Jerusalem. We can descend from the roadway by steps into the open square in front of the building, entering which, and again descending forty-seven steps more, we find ourselves in a dimly lighted subterranean church, with several altars belonging to the various sects, the sarcophagus of Mary being shown near the centre of the nave, with other conjectural tombs near by to Joseph, her husband, and Joachim and Anna, her parents. On our return to the road we shall find ourselves besieged by a number of poor creatures about whose infirmity we can have no manner of doubt, as they are lepers. They are



TOMB OF THE VIRGIN



GROUP OF LEPERS

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hideously repulsive; their faces, hands, and feet look as if they are rotting away, as indeed they are. They are compelled to live away down the valley, for although it does not appear that their disease is contagious, except under close and prolonged contact, yet they are "unclean," and it is well that they should be kept from living with other people. Their only means of support is the alms they receive by begging, except, indeed, those who can be induced to go into the lepers' home, where they are housed, kept clean, well fed, and receive the best medical attention to mitigate their sufferings; the only condition being that the sexes must be kept apart, it being recognised that if they would only do so for one generation the dreadful complaint could be stamped out.

But many of them prefer their liberty to being thus kept, and as among the physically degenerate there often exists strong animal passions, the lepers go on preferring to marry, and so bring into existence a progeny of tainted children who sooner or later succumb to the disease. The young children of lepers are frequently pretty, lively, and sharp, and cannot be told from children of healthy parents; but at about the age of ten years the tongue and voice is attacked, the extremities of the fingers and toes become affected, and soon the nose and face is disfigured; the disease gradually working its ravages, until the fingers, toes, and feet drop away, and eventually the victim dies. Leprosy is an incurable complaint, and yet the Great Physician could make the leper clean.

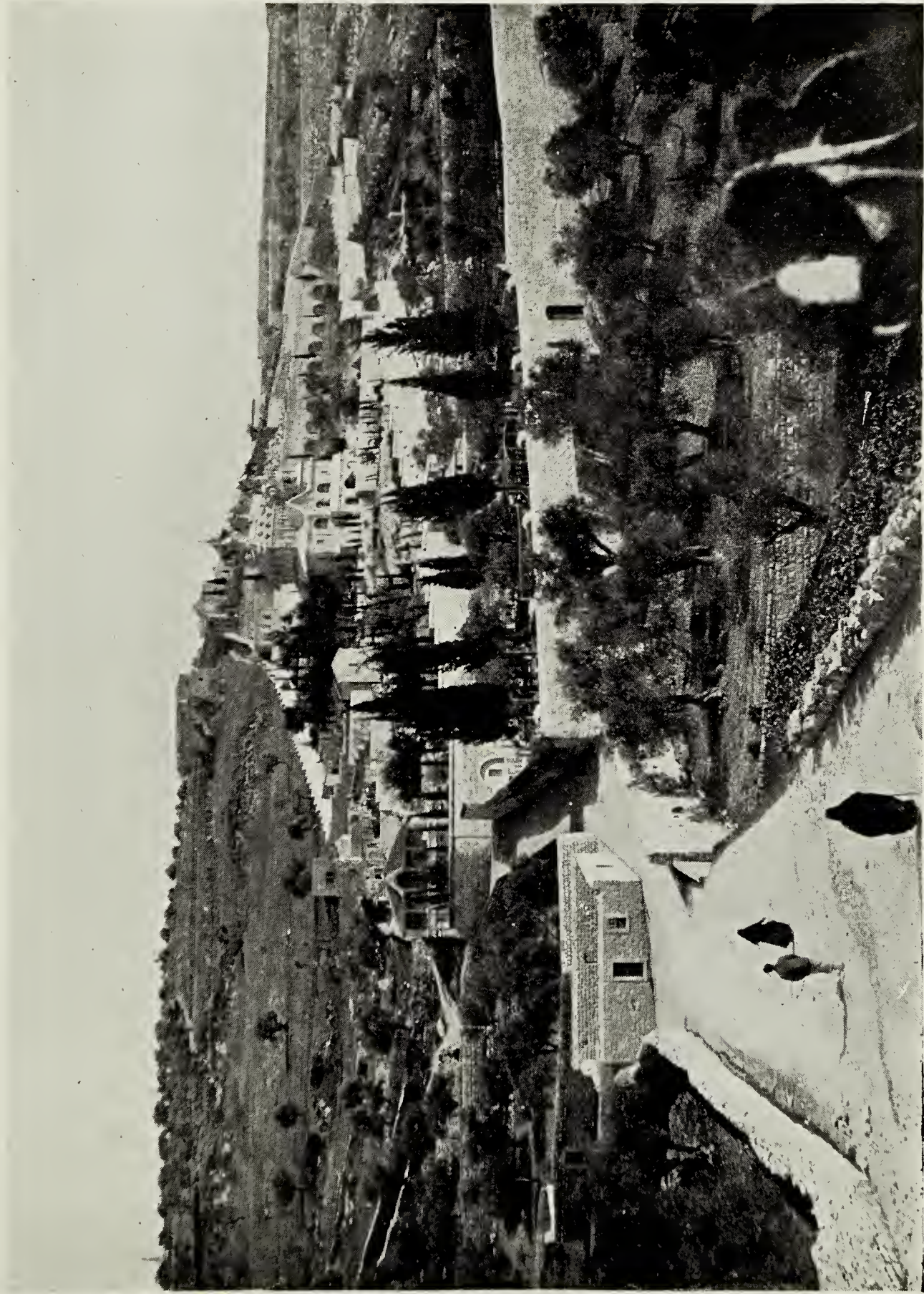
We turn a few paces up the hill-side immediately in front of us, and then up a kind of passage to the right, where we see a low doorway; if this is not open, we knock, and the door is opened by a Franciscan monk, and we are allowed to enter. This is the reputed garden of Gethsemane, but whether what we see within the four walls comprises its original extent we can form no opinion. One thing seems pretty certain: that hereabouts, somewhere close at hand, must be the place where the Saviour endured His agony. The New Testament narrative says: "Jesus

went with His disciples over the brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He entered"; and the place must therefore be close at hand.

There are eight very aged olive trees—some of the oldest we can find in the country—within the enclosure, and the monks in charge assure pilgrims that these are the identical trees under which Jesus "sweat as it were great drops of blood." We know that when Titus besieged Jerusalem he cut down all the trees near the city, so that these very trees can hardly be those that stood here in Christ's time. But the olive is not killed by being cut down; it shoots up again from the same roots, and it may be, therefore, that these are the offspring of the trees under which the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering; and from this place—with the cross before Him, and a heavier cross upon Him—He rose up from the garden and went forth to die. The pilgrims are shown here numerous legendary sites, which, however, do not appeal to us; and though we cast aside these absurd superstitions as unworthy of our notice, yet it is with hushed spirits we walk around the garden, and the lines are recalled to our minds—

"Go to dark Gethsemane,
Ye that feel the tempter's power,
Your Redeemer's conflict see,
Watch with Him one bitter hour;
Turn not from His grief away,
Learn of Jesus Christ to pray."

Turning back again into the main road, and, after a few paces, turning down the path to the right which leads to the bed of the valley, we soon come to a series of tombs or sepulchral monuments, the first and most imposing of which is popularly known as the tomb of Absalom. What the monument does represent, or for what purpose it was carved out of the solid rock which forms part of the mountain-side, it is difficult to say with certainty, the tradition connecting it with Absalom not dating farther back than the twelfth century; and the Bordeaux pilgrim who visited



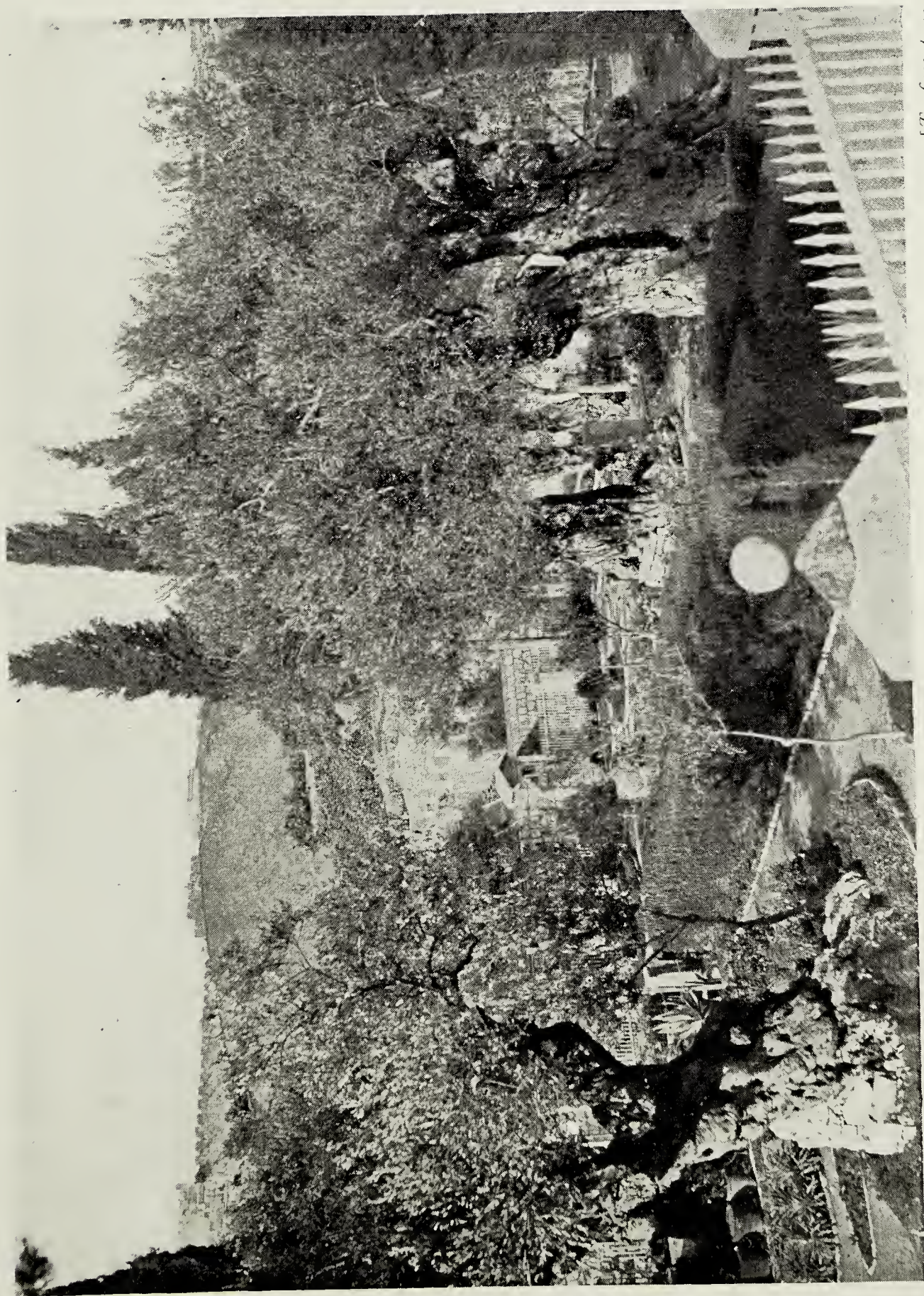
GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE AND MOUNT OF OLIVES

[To face p. 42



JERUSALEM FROM CALVARY

[To face p. 38



GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE, INTERIOR

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Jerusalem in A.D. 333 says that at that time it was called the tomb of Hezekiah, king of the Jews. Another writer in the seventh century calls it the tomb of Jehoshaphat; while Josephus speaks of a monument being erected here to Alexander Janneus; and the inscription on it which has lately been found corroborates this. However, we read in the Second Book of Samuel that Absalom "reared for himself a pillar in the king's dale, and called it after his own name, for he said, 'I have no children to keep my name in remembrance,' and to this day it is called Absalom's Place." So that, at any rate, it may be near, if not on, the site of Absalom's pillar; and it does serve to keep his name in remembrance, for the mass of stones we see lying at its base is said to have been hurled at it from time immemorial by the Jews, in execration of Absalom's rebellious conduct. It is about forty-seven feet high, and contains a small chamber about eight feet square, which is now, of course, quite tenantless. It does not appear that it ever contained any sarcophagus, as the holes which have been made, possibly by Arabs in search of treasure, are not large enough for such to have been removed. For the same reason, *i. e.* fear of plunder by the Arabs, the entrance to the rock tomb of Jehoshaphat, just behind, has now been filled up with masonry.

Just opposite the tomb of Absalom is a well from which the women of the adjacent village of Siloam draw their supply of water. A little farther on we see another of these square, rock-cut monuments, called the tomb of the prophet Zacharias, who was stoned by command of King Joash; and it may have been upon this monument that Christ was looking, and to which He referred, when He addressed to the Pharisees the bitter words: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous. . . . Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets."

Almost close by is an extensive grotto, how old none

can tell, which goes by the name of the tomb of St. James; the only connection, however, it seems to have with the Apostle is the monkish tradition that he hid here during the interval between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. A few years since an inscription in square Hebrew characters was found in an almost inaccessible position, which records that the family of the Beni Hezir are buried here—the family of priests referred to in 1 Chron. xxiv. 15.

Just on the right-hand side of the path here we are surprised to see a great heap of loose stones lying in the bed of the valley, which looks as if a cartload had been shot down here. Very few persons would conjecture that this marks a tomb; this is, however, the case, and it is venerated by the Jews of Jerusalem, as it marks the site of the burial-place of the rabbi Kolonimos, who lived in the early part of the eighteenth century.

For some act he had done which troubled his conscience he spent the rest of his days in the performance of penances, and charged his friends on his deathbed that they should not accord him the honour of burial, but, having borne his body to the brow of the hill overlooking the valley, they should cast it down the declivity as if it were the carcase of a donkey, and cover him over just where his body stopped rolling, and as each passed by they should hurl a stone at the spot. It is said that the accumulation of stones we see is the result. The western slope of the Mount of Olives, on our left, is now covered with innumerable Jewish graves.

It is the most intense desire of every Jew to be buried at Jerusalem, and as near the valley of Jehoshaphat as possible, as here, they believe, the Last Judgment will take place, in fulfilment of their interpretation of Joel and Zechariah; and some of them believe that if they die in any other part of the world, the journey here will have to be made underground in the same way as moles burrow their passages. The village just above us, on our left, is the village of Siloam, the inhabitants of which bear an evil character among tourists for their insolent behaviour.

Continuing the rough passage down the bed of the valley, we soon see, on our right, a cavern-like opening in the hill-side, with steps leading down into it. On going down these steps we find a large pool of water, from which women are constantly filling their leathern bottles or other receptacles—paraffin oil tins coming greatly into use of late years—with water for home use. This is called the Fountain of the Virgin, the water in which probably comes by some ancient conduit from another source, and which must act like a syphon, as the water rises and falls to various levels intermittently; and in consequence of this many, including such experts as Hanauer and Condor, believe this to be the veritable pool of Bethesda. It was at one time, however, very much larger than at the present. Just at the top of the steps, on the platform looking south, we notice a paved square space, and at the back of this, in the wall, an alcove which serves as a *mihrab*, or praying-place, for the Moslems; and the people of Siloam, when bringing their dead to the cemetery near the walls, place the bier on the space in front of this praying-place and hold a short service. The dead bodies are not enclosed in a coffin, but are simply carried on a bier; and the bearers are constantly being changed, as every one wishes to lend a helping hand, this being regarded as a token of respect. We now leave the bed of the valley, and, continuing by a path to the right round the brow of the hill for some distance, we come to another pool of water, which is one of the few undisputed sites in Jerusalem still retaining its old name, the pool of Siloam. In visiting this place we feel a satisfaction that while so many of the traditional sites are doubtful, and some of which must ever, we fear, remain matters of speculation, there are a few places, of which this is certainly one, which are authentic. It is of considerable size, being now about fifty-five feet long, eighteen feet broad, and twenty feet deep; but was formerly much wider than it is now. It has never more than a foot or eighteen inches of water in now, having, as is the case with so many of these pools, been sadly allowed

to fall out of repair. The water is not used for drinking purposes, but women bring their clothes to wash here.

It was to this pool the blind man was sent by the Saviour after He had anointed his eyes with clay. It was to Siloam the Levite was sent annually with the golden pitcher on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, and from it he brought the water that was poured over the sacrifice in remembrance of the water that flowed from the rock Rephidim. Through it runs a stream from the pool of the Virgin, which empties lower down into the King's Garden; and it was probably in allusion to this rivulet that the prophet Isaiah spake when he said: "The waters of Shiloh go softly." Milton refers to this rivulet as "Shiloh's brook that flowed fast by the oracle of God." And another of our sacred poets alludes to the same rivulet as a figure to describe the tranquillity and serenity of the Church of God—

"Our minds shall be serene and calm,
Like Siloa's peaceful flood,
Whose soft and silvery streams reflect
The city of our God."

Several investigators have explored the whole length of the tunnel, which was probably constructed during the reign of Hezekiah, and through which the water is conveyed from one pool to the other; but it was left for a native boy to discover in the passage the famous Siloam inscription which has been characterised by Sir Walter Besant as "by far the most important of any found in Jerusalem." Part of this inscription is now to be seen in the Constantinople national museum; some part of it is lost, for on hearing the boy speak of some writing he said he had seen on the wall of the channel, a native started hacking it out to sell to tourists, not knowing its importance. Fortunately Professor Sayce, with Herr Schick and Dr. Guthe, as well as Colonel Condor, had taken some impressions of it before it was destroyed, and the translation proves it to be one of the most interesting of the ancient Hebrew inscriptions yet found. It describes the



CONVENT OF NOTRE DAME



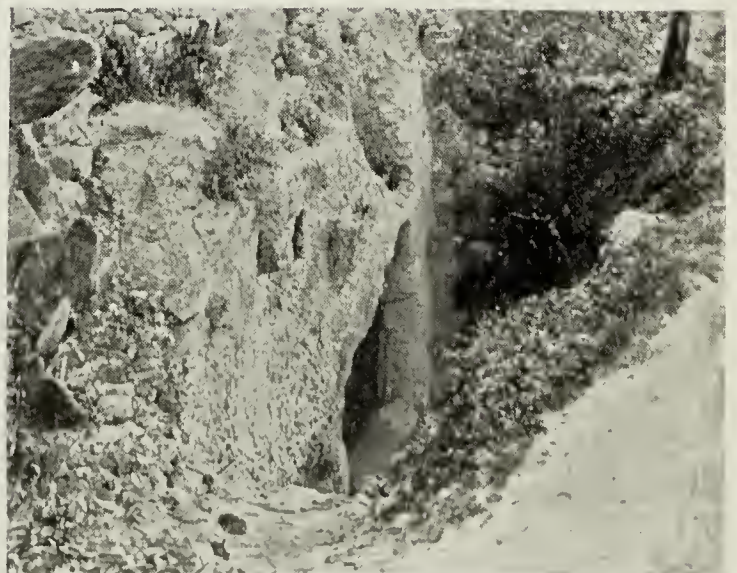
ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH



ROCK OF BEZETHA

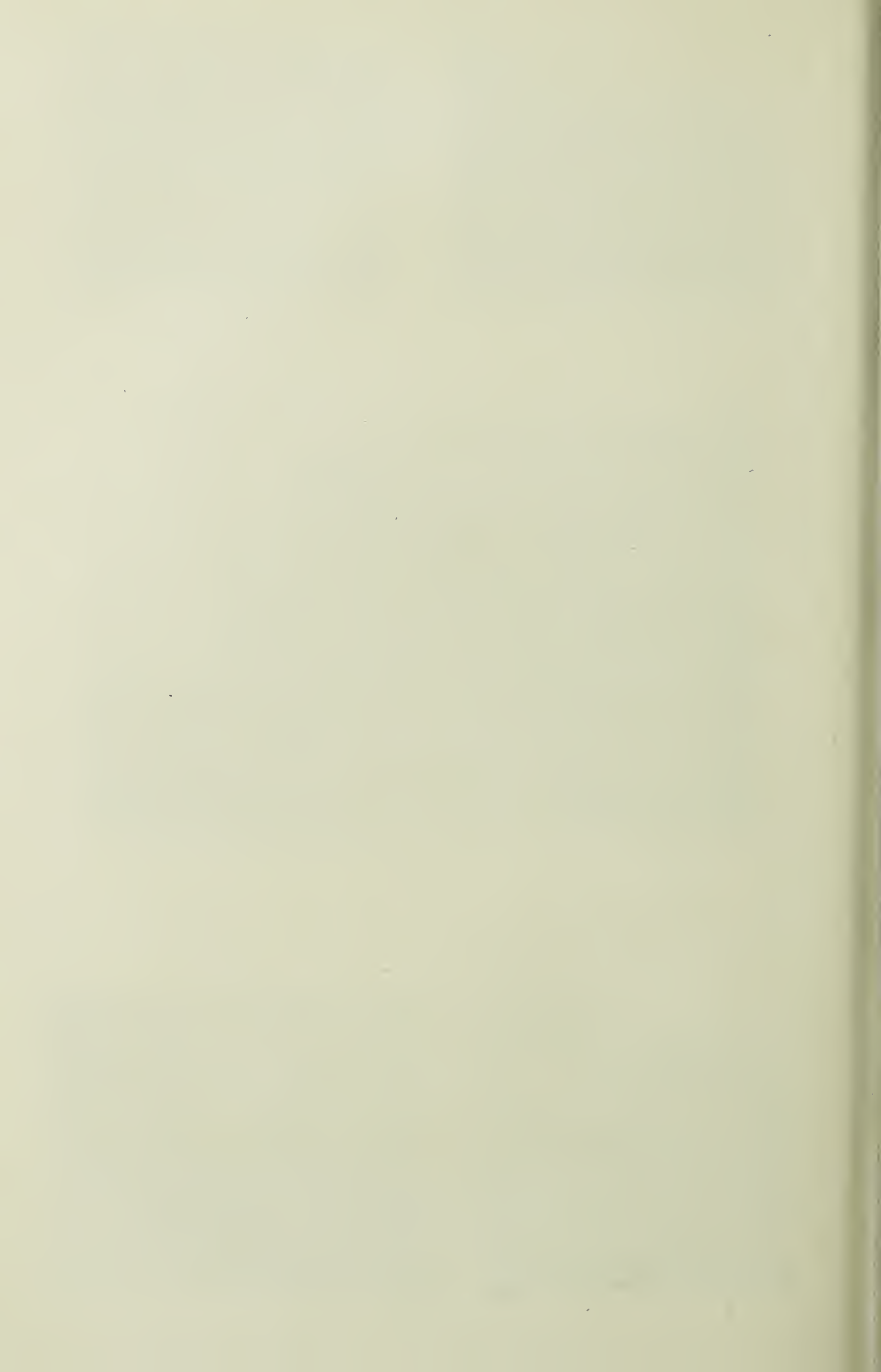


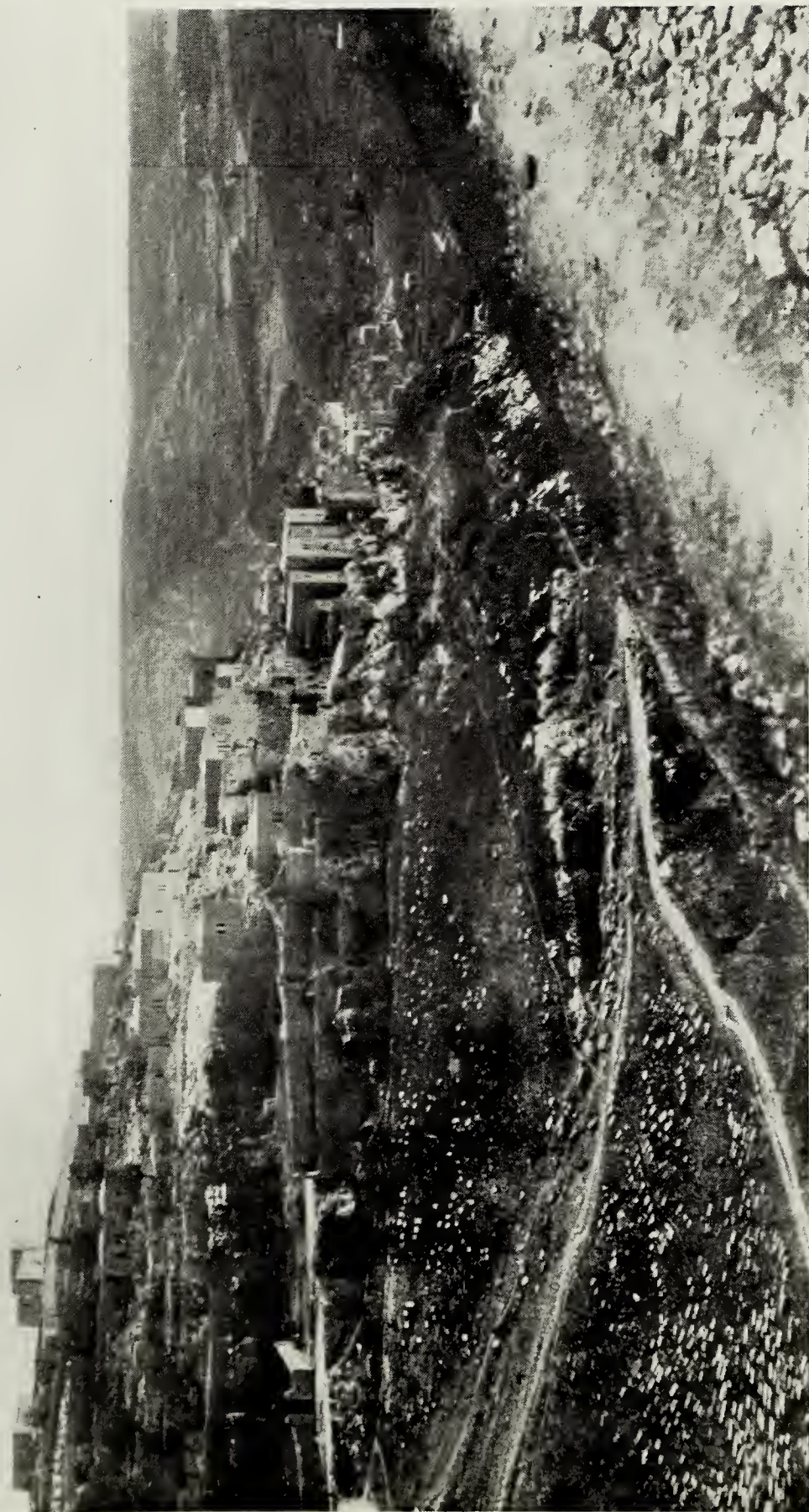
THE "GARDEN" FROM CALVARY



TOMB AS FIRST OPENED

[To face p. 38]





VILLAGE OF SILOAM

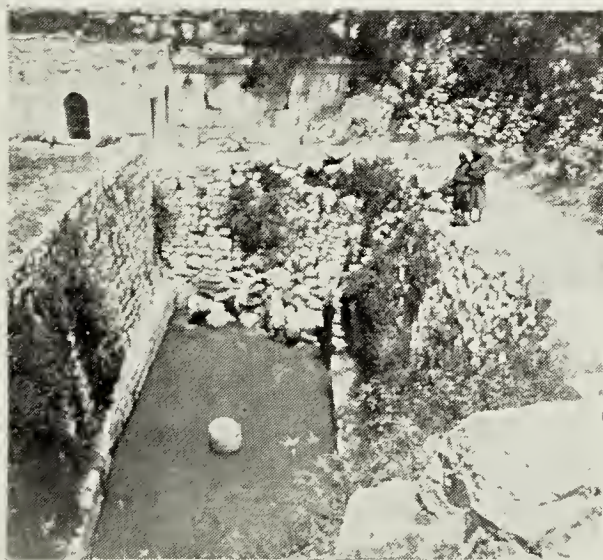
[To face p. 50



FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN



GRAVE OF KOLONIMOS



POOL OF SILOAM



A NATIVE FUNERAL



ACELDAMA



PLACE OF ISAIAH'S MARTYRDOM

[To face p. 50]

method of the excavators in making the tunnel, and tells how that—just as so many of our modern tunnels have been made—the work was begun at each end, and continued until the workmen met in the middle. The place where they met can still be seen, as there is an “excess” in the rock at one place.

Leaving this most interesting place and turning again down the valley round the brow of Ophel, we see on a triangular piece of ground fenced in with stones an old tree which, as it is carefully propped up, suggests that it marks some holy site. The legend of the place is that the tree marks the place of Isaiah’s martyrdom, where he was sawn asunder.

We have now, on our left, the King’s Gardens, or King’s Dale; the land in the valley here is extraordinarily fertile, as well, indeed, it may be, for the crude sewage of the town comes tumbling over the stones of the valley, and empties itself over the bank by which we pass into the cultivated land below.

We now see before us the place where the valley of Hinnom comes down at right angles from the west, and loses itself in the valley of Jehoshaphat; on the hill-side opposite lies Aceldama, or the Field of Blood. The lower part of the gorge, where the two valleys join, is the place known to the Jews as “Gehenna,” for here once smouldered the ever-burning fires which consumed the rubbish of the city, and it was here the idolatrous kings offered the sacrifices of the Jewish children to Moloch. Our Saviour repeatedly used the phrase “Gehenna,” speaking, as He often did, from a Jewish standpoint, and the “wailing and gnashing of teeth” of course referred to the agony of the burning infants.

The climb up the valley of Hinnom is rugged and, in places, steep; the flourishing olive trees, however, give a pleasant sense of charm to the eye, and it is an interesting walk.

About half-way up the hill we notice an iron water-pipe lying on the ground and crossing the path; it is, we see,

brought from over the hill on the south, and is taken up to the city. We think it is a slovenly way in which to do this work, but it is one of those cases where "necessity knows no law," for during the winter of—I think it was 1903, there was no rainfall in Jerusalem, and as the people are entirely dependent on the rain collected during the winter months for their supply of this great necessity of life, the scarcity caused much distress.

All the tanks and cisterns were becoming empty, and every drop of liquid that could be found, however filthy, was carefully collected for use.

The situation became acute, and the Sultan, who had hitherto resisted every attempt to furnish the city with a better supply of this necessary of life, saying "if ever the need arose he would supply it himself," now felt obliged to give the order. Accordingly a shipload of three-inch pipes was sent up to Jerusalem, and were so hastily laid from Solomon's pools, seven miles away, that there was no time to dig trenches; they were, therefore, screwed together as rapidly as possible, and laid over the surface of the ground.

Fortunately there is seldom frost here sufficient to do any damage, and therefore their open situation little matters. One branch of the pipe is taken up the hill on the right, and conveys the water into the reservoirs of the temple area; and a smaller branch is taken up the valley to the road where it crosses the lower end of the pool of Gihon. The pools of Solomon are on a higher level than part of Jerusalem, and the water comes from the pools by natural gravitation, being syphoned over the intervening hills.

At this point it may be convenient to remember that Solomon brought a supply of water to Jerusalem from this same source by a stone conduit, and this proves that the principle of the syphon was not unknown to the ancients.

Other pipes were made and laid during the Roman occupation, and prove to be of a very different kind from those in use in modern times. I am enabled to give a photograph of one of these pipes; it consists of a block of

stone about two feet six inches square and eighteen inches thick, with a hole drafted in the centre fifteen inches in diameter; there is a socket at one end, and a flange at the other, showing how they were joined and cemented together, it being, of course, necessary that they should be air- and water-tight for the purpose of syphonage. The boy standing against the stone, curiously intent on watching my operation of taking the picture, serves to show the proportion of the size of the stone pipe.

The hill on our right was once enclosed within the walls, as proved by the researches of Dr. Bliss and Mr. J. Dickie, who in 1894-97 traced the course of the south wall. A large tract of the land on the hill has been acquired by the Augustine Fathers, who at the present time are engaged in making extensive excavations, and who have found remains of what is possibly prehistoric cave dwellings of Jebusite times, and some Roman remains.

As we near the summit of the valley, we see on our left, in the bed of the valley, what is locally known as the "Box Colony," a colony of Egyptian Jews, who have established themselves here, and built themselves houses or huts of boxes and tins. High up beyond this stands the imposing British Ophthalmic Hospital, with Dr. Kant in charge, who with his wife—no less devoted to the work than her husband—are devoting their lives to the beneficent work of relieving and curing diseases of the eye, so prevalent among the people here.

High up on Mount Zion, on our right, stands Bishop Gobat's School and the English Protestant cemetery, containing the graves of many well-known men—Bishops Alexander and Gobat, Herr Schick the archæologist and exponent of the models of the temple, Spafford the sweet hymn-writer, and many visitors to Jerusalem, who, having died here, now find a resting-place under the rubbish of Mount Zion.

In clearing away the accumulated débris on the hill-side to form a level terrace for the burying-ground, the excavators laid bare the perpendicular escarpment of rock

on the north, on the top of which were found the remains of an old Jebusite wall, which formed part of the fortifications defending the city. The position here was deemed so impregnable that when David came up against the defenders, they felt they could hurl at him the taunt: "Thou shalt not come in hither; for even the blind and the lame will keep thee away."

A number of rock-hewn cisterns were also cleared out, and a secret stairway found cut in the rock, giving access from the walls to the valley below. That part of the summit of Mount Zion which now lies outside the walls is almost entirely covered with Christian cemeteries; for the Latins, Greeks, Armenians, and other sects have each their own burying-ground, set apart for themselves as scrupulously as Churchmen and Nonconformists keep distinct even in death in our own land.

The writer once saw the funeral of a Russian pilgrim woman in the Greek cemetery one afternoon; she had died in the morning, and almost before her body was cold they brought her to her burial, the preparation for which commences in this country immediately after the doctor has pronounced life extinct. They brought the body on a bier, without any coffin; a procession of the woman's fellow-pilgrims following, and singing very sweetly as they came along hymns of joyful triumph; one might think they were going to a festival, rather than a funeral. But surely, to those who can believe, with the sure faith those pilgrims have, that being "absent from the body" they are "present with the Lord," it is a more consistent, as well as more sensible, attitude of committing their departed to the dust than that of mourning and melancholily lamenting their demise. We may be sure it was in this spirit the Apostle Paul was led to raise the exultant cry: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" The Protestant cemetery is approached through the grounds of Bishop Gobat's School.

The most imposing of the old buildings here is that known as the tomb of David, now overshadowed by the

lofty tower of the new Catholic church of the Germans, built on a site given by the ex-Sultan of Turkey for that purpose.

As to whether the old building which is called the tomb of David does cover the actual resting-place of that king there is at present no reliable proof to show; it seems a most likely spot, although many believe it to be elsewhere; indeed, some excavators are at the present time seeking for evidence of the tomb on Ophel somewhere above the pool of Siloam, and Condor believes the real tomb of David and the early kings of Judah to be the caves under the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. But in any case the building is an old and interesting one, and is one of the Moslems' most holy places, so much so that it is often with difficulty visitors are allowed to enter. In an upper room is shown the place where the Saviour—according to a very old tradition—partook of His last Passover with His disciples, and where He instituted the supper as a memorial of Himself. It is said to be also the place where the disciples were assembled on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost came down upon them.

If this be really the tomb of David and the place where the disciples met, the reference in Peter's sermon to the adjacent tomb of David was very appropriate: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, who is both dead and buried, and whose sepulchre is with us till this day."

Resuming our walk from the valley of Hinnom, we now soon join the road leading from the station, where it ascends from the dam across the upper end of the valley, which dam forms the lower end of the Sultan's pool.

Just above this place, and near the road between here and the station, is an ancient quarry, and the way in which it has been left shows how the ancients quarried out their blocks of stone. Chases were cut in the rock, into which dry wedges of wood were inserted; these were then made wet, the wetting caused the wedges to swell, and the slabs of stone were thus detached from the rock.

Near the same place is also an interesting cave, which at some remote period probably formed a habitation, and is an example of the kind of retreats when the persecuted Christians were compelled to live in "dens and caves of the earth." In another part of Jerusalem we see a similar cave, part of which has been filled up with stonework, leaving only an opening for a doorway; and yet again we see a dwelling constructed above-ground of stones; several of these form dwellings for the peasant gardeners in their gardens; and there are also improvements on these in the very plain and simple dwellings, when the dwellings began to take the form of houses. Indeed, we may see around Jerusalem the complete evolution of house-forming from the earliest times to the present.

The large pool on our left, now called the pool of the Sultan, has very generally been considered to be identical with the lower pool of Gihon in Old Testament history; and the most interesting event in connection with this locality, if this really be Gihon, is the anointing here of Solomon as king.

In order to secure the succession to his youngest son, Solomon, David virtually abdicated in his old age, and, taking with him Nathan the prophet and Zadok the priest and a company of eighty men, he placed Solomon on his own special ass, which only the king rode, and went down to Gihon, and Solomon was crowned king.

There is another very interesting connection with Gihon, on account of its pools. When Sennacherib with his great army threatened Jerusalem in the reign of Hezekiah, the latter took counsel with his princes and mighty men to stop the water of the fountains which were without the city. So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, saying: "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?" Higher up there is another of these pools, called the upper pool of Gihon, now rarely containing any water. From this pool an aqueduct was made to another pool within the city, which drained off all the water from the upper pool. In excavat-

ing for the foundations of his new house on the line of this aqueduct Mr. Clark laid it bare, but carefully preserved and repaired the channel, so that at any future time it might possibly again be used. The native owner of adjoining property, however, rendered futile Mr. Clark's work, for in making his foundations a little farther on he entirely destroyed the channel, by reason of which the valuable pool inside the city, called the pool of Hezekiah, has been rendered useless; and as it is proposed to do away with it altogether, a valuable historical landmark will be lost.

In the dry part of the lower pool we notice men and girls engaged in a curious and tedious employment; these people search among the rubbish of the district for all the old broken potsherds they can find, and, taking them there, they smash these into small pieces with a large stone, and then grind it into a fine powder, which makes a valuable kind of cement which will not crack, and with this they line their cisterns for holding water. It is an old custom, and illustrates the passage: "Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

A number of houses are now being built all up the valley on the other side of the pool, most of them by Jews; and the terraces of almshouses we see with the old windmill at the rear were erected by Sir Moses Montefiore to commemorate his visit to Jerusalem in his old age. But just above these we see an old ruin, and curiously we note two bells hanging from a projection, and this makes us inquire as to its purpose. We find this is really an ancient church—the Church of St. George—and service is held in the ruin occasionally, probably to keep claim to it, until the Greek Church, to which it is attached, can find funds to turn it into a hospice.

The high ground near by on the left has all been purchased by, or in some way assigned to, the Greek Church, and they have plans for an elaborate extension here, the situation being one of the finest, healthiest, and most pleasant to be found around the whole city.

A pleasant pathway leads through these grounds, and

we often enjoyed a quiet ramble up there, breathing in the pure fresh air, and gathering flowers—anemones, pink flax, etc.—before the man came with his oxen and plough, to prepare the land for sowing. Then one day we saw the sower come with his basket of grain, and we watched him as he cast his seed all around: there was the good ground, which had been ploughed, and the stony ground—large flat surfaces of rock, some jutting out of the ground, some lying just beneath the surface; and near by ran the way-side path. How exactly it illustrated the parable! Surely the Great Teacher must have seen just such a sower and just such a field; and we were tempted to withdraw our camera, and before the man was aware of what we were doing, we had the scene recorded on our plate.

We saw a Mahomedan workman, too, near here, employed in getting stone from the ground for building; and as he heard the cry of the Muezzin from the mosque calling the hour of prayer, he at once left off his work, and, spreading his cloak upon the ground, prostrated himself in prayer, with his face towards Mecca; for the Mahomedans, no matter where they are, or in what they may be engaged, never fail to fall upon their knees when they hear the Muezzin's call. Their genuflexions and demeanour call to mind the words of the Psalmist: "O come, let us worship and fall down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker."

The ascending road now brings us again near the walls from which we have made so wide a *détour*, and on our right we see some massive towers, the first of which is surmounted by a minaret from which the Muezzin calls the faithful to prayer.

The window openings we see in the wall here are the windows of the barracks just inside; the square towers, now called the towers of David, are the citadel, and upon those towers are placed some old cannon, ostensibly for the defence of the city, but now for this purpose of very little use, as a ball from a modern cannon would send the whole citadel flying into chaos.



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THE "KING'S DALE"



WELL OF EN ROGEL



ANCIENT CAVE DWELLINGS



ZION GATE



ANCIENT WATER-PIPE

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The two square towers are believed to be those of Hippicus, the friend of Herod, and Phasælas, Herod's brother; there was formerly another, the tower Herod called Mariamne, after his favourite wife, whom, however, he at last murdered.

At the foot of the walls we see all that remains of the ancient fosse or moat, and the open space in front of this is generally occupied by reclining camels, which, after having tramped long distances in bringing merchandise to Jerusalem, are enjoying much-needed rest while awaiting their return from the town.

Donkeys, and also carriages, are hereabouts standing for hire; and so far have matters advanced that here on the wall of the police-station a board is affixed indicating the legal fare for the various distances.

We next come to the old Jaffa gateway, now rendered obsolete, and for protection of the city useless, as a great breach has been made in the wall close by, so that the German Emperor William, on the occasion of his visit, could be driven into the city.

A new clock-tower has recently been erected close by, which, although no doubt useful, seems somewhat of an incongruity, standing as it does on a portion of the old wall. The fountain here was erected to commemorate the twenty-fifth year of the ex-Sultan's reign.

Turning again to the left up the Jaffa road, we see shops on either side, mostly kept by Germans or German Jews; and from here we quickly regain our hotel, having made a complete circuit of the city walls.

CHAPTER V

A WALK INSIDE THE CITY

ENTERING by the Damascus gateway, we see an open space, flanked on one side by shops and on the other side by ruins. We notice that in Jerusalem, as, indeed, everywhere else, the children play in the streets; and it brings to our mind that period of Jerusalem's desolation when there were no children to play, and the prophet, while mourning over the ruin of his deserted and desolate city, sees a better time coming; for he says joyfully: "The children shall play in the streets of Jerusalem."

From the open space we see the road before us, which divides in the form of a Y, the right branch leading by native shops towards the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and David Street. We take the road which leads straight on to the left, and after a short distance we see another road coming into the one we are in at right angles on our left; we turn up this side street, and pass beneath an archway. This arch is known as the Arch of Ecce Homo, and the narrow road on which it stands as the Via Dolorosa—the street of pain, or sorrowful way, along which, it is averred, Christ was compelled to bear His cross. Tradition states that it was against the stones of this arch our Saviour leaned, as He bore the weight of His cross. Pilate came out, and, pointing to the bruised and stricken Saviour, said: "Behold the Man!" Hence it is called the Arch of Ecce Homo. The sloping path leading from here up to the Turkish barracks is the place from which the steps were taken and placed in the building called the Santa Scala, near the Church of St. Lateran at Rome, and so, of course, this is the site of the scene depicted in Doré's grand picture



BISHOP GOBAT'S SCHOOL



BISHOP GOBAT'S TOMB, ENGLISH CEMETERY

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SITE OF OLD JEBUSITE WALL



TOMB OF DAVID

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of Christ leaving the Prætorium. Now if we turn and look back at the arch we shall see that it is not a perfect ellipse, and that part of the arch on the right appears shortened, or cut off, as if in building the wall on this side of the road there had been an encroachment; and if we go inside the building, which has now been made into a church, we shall see that such has at some time been the case. When Father Ratisbonne purchased the site, for the purpose of building here the school convent and church of the Little Sisters of Zion, and the workmen were clearing away the accumulation of rubbish from the inside, they found the remaining portion of this arch still standing; and it proves that the street outside is the veritable Via Dolorosa, but that it was, in the time of Christ, a wide road leading to Pilate's Judgment Hall, and that the arch was, in the Roman time, a triple triumphal arch, much like the Arch of Constantine at Rome. Our photograph gives a view of what it is like at the present time, the Catholics having converted the ruins into the altar of the church.

On clearing out the débris still further, they came to the original pavement, which they cleansed and laid bare; and they found here two Roman pedestals, or tribunes, from one of which Pilate may have made his declaration that he "washed his hands in innocence of the blood of this just man."

The excavation shows that the original surface of the road was about five feet lower than at the present, and that the pavement of the road under the central arch was scored for the horses' feet, while that under the side arches was left smooth for pedestrians. This pavement extends for some one hundred and twenty paces; there are still the marks on the stones where the soldiers played their games, and there is no doubt whatever that this is the pavement, or Gabatha, upon whose stones the Saviour awaited His trial, surrounded by the soldiers. One cannot look upon this place without feeling that of all the holy places in Jerusalem this is entitled to the greatest respect; for without doubt the feet of Christ walked this pavement during

the last phases of His passion; here He was scourged; and from this place He started bearing His cross, followed by the taunting, clamouring throng toward Calvary.

Passages, too, have been discovered leading from this place to the temple area, along which soldiers could be rapidly moved into the open square, and by means of which we can understand how it was that soldiers so quickly appeared on the scene to quell the tumult when Paul was preaching, and by which they rescued him from the menacing mob.

The road leading hence takes us to St. Stephen's Gate. We first of all pass through an arch and by a tower on the site of the tower of Antonia; then on our right is an open space occupying the site of an ancient pool called the Birket Israel, now, however, filled up with rubbish; this was at one time believed to be the pool of Bethesda, a claim almost abandoned now.

If we look up on the wall of the new building on our left, near a doorway we shall see a tablet with an inscription informing us that here is the probable pool of Bethesda. On entering the doorway or passage, we find ourselves in an open square, with cultivated flower-beds, and broken columns, entablature, capitols, etc., arranged around. We also see here a large church, the west front of which opens on this square. This building is called the Church of St. Anne, and it was given by the then Sultan of Turkey to the French after the close of the Crimean War. It is a well-preserved edifice of the crusading period, and was in such a good state of preservation when handed over that no material alterations have been necessary. When we consider that it was first of all offered to the English, and by its situation, as well as the suitability of the fabric itself, was so adapted for an English church, we cannot but think it was a great pity it was not accepted, especially when we remember the immense amount of worry and trouble entailed in securing a firman to build a church on Mount Zion, as well as the great cost, said to have been seventeen thousand pounds, which was spent on building



INTERIOR OF "UPPER ROOM," TOMB OF DAVID

the fabric. This church is built over the traditional home of Joachim and Anna, the parents of the Virgin, and in one of the rock caves under the church, approached by a flight of twenty-one steps in the south-east corner, the Virgin is supposed to have been born.

But it is in the "find" at the south-west corner of the square that the interest culminates, for here has been discovered what is generally believed to be the pool of Bethesda. Part of a pool has been uncovered, but it will be some time before the excavations can be completed, for over the ruins here, as everywhere else in Jerusalem, houses and huts have been erected; and the cost and delay of purchasing these, as well as the expenses of the excavation, have to be met.

For this purpose the White Fathers make a reasonable charge of half-a-franc to each person visiting the pool, the proceeds being devoted to the further pursuing this important work. On entering the enclosure, we proceed down some steps until we come to the water contained in a large square rock-hewn cistern; many feet above this we are shown another cistern nearly full of water, and when this second and higher cistern is filled, it, at a certain point, is automatically syphoned over into the lower tank. Various old paintings and carvings have been found in the excavations, showing that in the early crusading ages this place was associated with the pool of Bethesda. In viewing the section of débris through which the excavation has been made, we see how the city has been repeatedly thrown into ruins, and again rebuilt on those ruins. No less than five different periods of architecture are found here piled one on the other, the last being Arab work, and this is the most inferior of all.

On leaving the grounds we come almost immediately to the St. Stephen's Gate, and having climbed to the top of the wall for the sake of the view looking towards the mosque of Omar, the great Askenazem Jewish synagogue, and, in the foreground, the roof of the Church of St. Anne, we retrace our steps again to where the Via Dolorosa joins

the main street. Here we realise what a mistake has been made in supposing the "sorrowful way" turned to the left, instead of the right, which would lead to "without the gate"; but we now turn to the left and follow the traditional Via Dolorosa. At the angle at which we turn to the left we notice a prostrate red limestone column, and probably we shall see pilgrims kneeling to kiss that column, this being called the third station of the cross, the tradition being that here Christ sank beneath the weight of His cross. We heard on one occasion a priest discoursing here to a band of pilgrims, and he told them that a visit to the stations of the cross—paying, of course, the necessary fees, the amounts of which he read from a book—would ensure them nine years' indulgence in purgatory! What a travesty of that religion which is free to all—the gift of God, "without money and without price." And what a pity, we thought, that the simple, devotional feelings of the pilgrims should be so imposed upon, when, especially at such a place and time, their faith might be strengthened and fortified without such artificial aids.

This, however, is but the beginning of a series of frauds imposed on the credulity of the simple, for a little farther on they are shown the house of the rich man, and the very place where Lazarus sat when the dogs came and licked his sores; forgetting the fact that no buildings now existing were here in the time of Christ; and, moreover, the narrative of Dives and Lazarus was given as a parable. At the corner we turn to the right up the hill, where there is a continuation of the stations, not worth our notice, save that as further illustrating the way impositions are forced on the credulous; at a building known as the house of Veronica the pilgrims are shown a handkerchief with the impression of the blood-stained face of the Lord, which representation, by the way, is also shown at many other places, and at the sight of which the pilgrims burst into tears.

Just before arriving at the square where we gain an entrance to the Holy Sepulchre, we see on our right a



LOWER POOL OF GIHON



UPPER POOL OF GIHON

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ANCIENT CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE



THE SOWER

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Russian building, in which are shown ruins upon which the Greek Church somewhat relies as proof that the Holy Sepulchre is built over Calvary, as the ruins are claimed to be part of the ancient wall, which, if it can be relied on as such, would certainly have brought the church just outside the walls. But in that case the walls must have assumed an almost impossible and most improbable shape, and, as pointed out by Condor, would have been useless for military defence, the very purpose for which the wall was built. The ruins have, however, been conclusively proved to belong to the foundations of Constantine's church, and to have nothing whatever to do with the city wall.

On our left the new German Protestant church is built on part of the Muristan, or Hospital of the Knights of St. John; which site was given by the ex-Sultan to the German Emperor Frederick, and which was opened with great ceremony by the Emperor William in 1898.

We now pass through a small archway, and find ourselves in the courtyard which lies in front of the entrance of the Church of the Sepulchre. Here vendors of trinkets which serve as souvenirs display their wares for pilgrims to purchase, and there is scarcely a town or village in Russia but some house or cottage can show mementoes of a visit to Jerusalem's holy places; many of these were purchased here or near by.

The Romanesque façade of the church gives an impression of the hoary antiquity of this part of the building, dating as it does from crusading times. The main fabric was, however, rebuilt after the great fire of 1808, which nearly demolished the building; it was completed two years later.

One door only of the double-headed doorway we see is ever opened now; this is opened at certain hours of the day, and is free to all except Jews to enter, although a heavy tax was imposed for admission down to the beginning of the last century. On entering we find, comfortably seated on a divan on our left, the Moslem custodians of the

place, who belong to a family which seems to have an hereditary privilege to the position, although it appears at first sight somewhat of an anomaly that persons of a hostile faith should have the appointment.

Much unnecessary fuss has been made by writers about this seeming incongruity, but we should remember after all the church is in a Moslem country, and these persons are simply officers of the law, or policemen, placed there to keep order when at certain times very great crowds visit the place; there is really no more irregularity in the matter than when on special occasions policemen are told off to regulate the crowds who sometimes visit St. Paul's in London.

We notice all around the entrance at the front of the church that flat gravestones are placed in the pavement, and near the door on the right one of these stones marks the last resting-place of Philip d'Aubigny, a valiant English knight, who was one of the signatories of the Magna Charta.

Immediately in front of us on entering lies the stone of anointing, which the pilgrims kiss, believing that on it the body of our Lord was laid for His anointing.

This stone has, however, been many times replaced, and moved about from place to place. The tombs of Godfrey de Bouillon and his brother Baldwin, the first crusading king of Jerusalem (Godfrey himself having refused the crown), were originally here, but were ultimately destroyed by the Greeks, because they were the memorials of Latin kings. Passing by a stone on the left, where guides tell tourists Mary stood to watch the anointing, we see before us the point of greatest interest in the building, namely, the Holy Sepulchre itself, which, it will be seen at once, is an entirely artificial erection, built of red limestone; in fact, a tablet over the entrance just inside records that it was built in the year 1810. Yet pilgrims believe that it is actually the tomb of the Lord, and we have watched them inside kneeling before the slab of marble which they are told was His resting-place, weeping their hearts away in

adoring grief. Laying aside all questions as to the authenticity of this and the various sites within the building, it is affecting to watch these pilgrims, and to remember that here for centuries thousands have worshipped in simple faith, believing that near by Christ was hung on the cross, and that in this tomb His body lay until the Resurrection on that first Easter morn.

The interior of the tomb chamber is very small, only six by seven feet; and as half that space is filled up by the marble slab, there is only room for four or five persons to enter at a time, besides the monk who sometimes stands inside, very perfunctorily sprinkling those who enter with holy water, and hurrying them out again as soon as possible, that others may enter.

This tawdry erection, which comprises the Chapel of the Angels with the tomb chamber, stands isolated from everything around it, except the tiny Coptic chapel at the back, and it stands exactly under the great rotunda, the dispute between the various sects as to the repairing the dome of which precipitated the Crimean War.

Immediately opposite the entrance to the Chapel of the Angels stands the Greek church, which is the largest of the churches within the building, and the most elaborately decorated. The round stone we see in the floor of this church is said to mark the centre of the world, and covers up a hole which formerly reached to purgatory, from whence the sounds of the sighs and groans of the lost were distinctly heard—so we are told; but, as this was so nerve-trying, it has since been covered over. Following the passages round the outside walls of this church, but still inside the main building, we find various stations and chapels, too numerous to mention; indeed, there are within the building sites for every purpose, from the earth of which Adam was made, and his tomb, to the chair in which Helena sat while the workmen were finding the cross. There is the column of scourging and the column of derision; an altar to Longinus, the centurion who pierced the Saviour's side, and another to St. Dinas, the penitent

thief; there is the tomb of Melchizedek, and the prison of Christ, and the holes in the wall where He was fastened; the place where the blind eye of the Roman centurion was restored to sight, and the spot where a drop of the blood of the Saviour, falling on Adam's dust, restored him to life. Indeed, the whole thing is a passion-play, and it seems almost a sacrilege to enter into the details of all the sights of the place, the only wonder being that any one can regard them seriously. The Chapel of Adam, with his tomb, stands on the immediate right of the principal entrance; and over this two stone stairways lead up to the Calvary, which is entirely artificial. Our accompanying photographic reproduction shows the place as it was four hundred years ago, then an open space, with the tombs of Godfrey and Baldwin (they were then intact) before they were removed, so that the Calvary could be built up. This reproduction was copied from a rare old book from the library of the Franciscan convent, and was written and illustrated by an Italian tourist named Zuaillardo, who visited the Jerusalem of that period.

The finest portion of the building architecturally is the Abyssinian Chapel of St. Helena, which we reach by descending a stairway of twenty-nine steps at the back of the Greek church; this is one of the oldest parts of the group of buildings, and although very dirty, yet the proportions are beautiful; another hole leading to purgatory used to be shown here.

The arguments for and against the place being genuine have been most voluminous; it is to be regretted that even now, and among Protestant Christians above all, the matter is made the subject of party disputes, the side taken depending upon whether the persons incline to High or Low Church. Laying aside all prejudice, party feeling, or religious bias, and approaching the vexed question under the calm light of historical research, the origin and purpose of the building appears to be: that Constantine, having embraced Christianity, desired to build a church as a memorial of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of the



TOWERS OF DAVID



SITE OF THE PRÆTORIUM

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CHILDREN PLAYING IN THE STREETS



LABOURERS WAITING TO BE HIRED



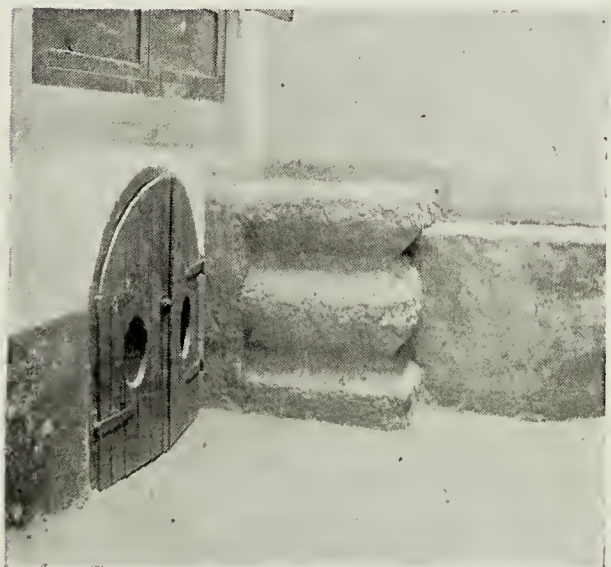
STREET IN JERUSALEM



VIA DOLOROSA



CHURCH OF ST. ANNE



A ROMAN TRIBUNE

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Lord, and this church he named the Church of Anastasis, or Resurrection: the connection of Helena, the mother of Constantine, and her miraculous finding of the cross, being a later legend. For the site of the church he selected a spot inside the walls, as being safer than on the outside, and here he built a church which was the precursor of the group of buildings subsequently erected; and the place, in the course of ages, has come to be regarded as the site itself.

In support of this charitable supposition, attention may be directed to the statement of St. Willibald, who wrote in A.D. 722, that it had been arranged that this place, which was formerly outside, should be transferred to the inside of the city; and the oldest map known, the map of Madeba, shows it inside.

The facility with which the transference of holy sites were made, and the reason for such transference, is a fact well known to all students of history. The argument that the site must have been outside the walls, because of the situation of the tombs, called the tombs of Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus, which are shown inside the building, at the back of the Coptic chapel, really prove nothing; for, even supposing them to be tombs, there is no evidence either as to the period of their construction, or for whom they were intended, the names given to them being entirely supposititious. They may be rock-cut cisterns, similar to others found hollowed out of the rocks in other parts of the city, or they may have been constructed after Jerusalem was in ruins, during the period when the Jews were expelled from Jerusalem. Certainly there is no evidence whatever that they were the tombs of Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus. We shall return to this subject when we try to point out the real site of Calvary. Before leaving the church most visitors visit the treasury, where they are shown the vestments of the crusading kings of Jerusalem, and the sword and spurs of the renowned Godfrey de Bouillon. It is said that persons can be invested with the honour of knighthood with this

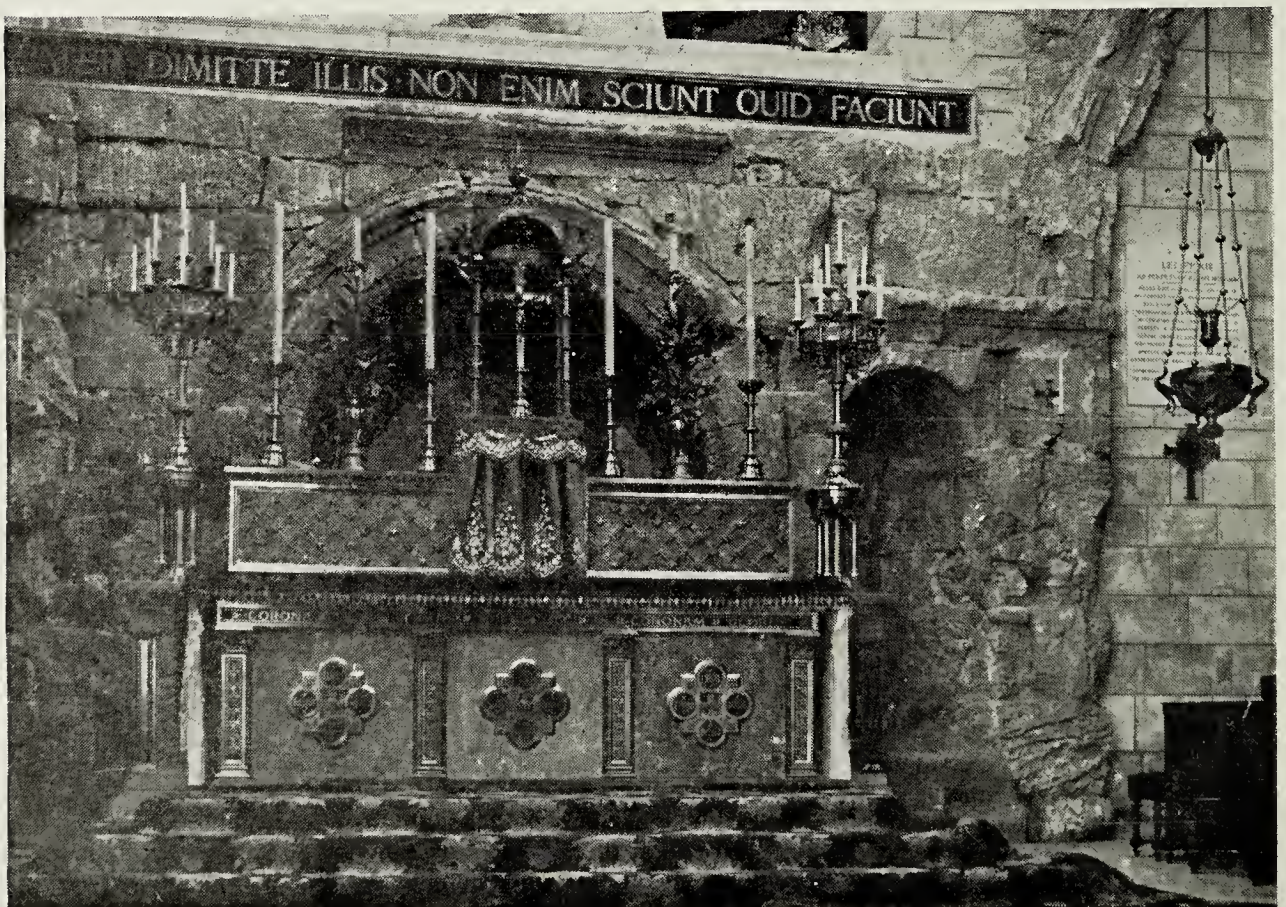
sword for about forty pounds (lowest), but the honour must be rather a doubtful one.

Nearly all writers, in describing the Holy Sepulchre, speak of the imposture of the "miracle of the holy fire," and every year visitors, if they can, while they are loud in denouncing the imposture, contrive, if it is at all possible, to be present during the ceremony. It is at such times especially that the presence of the custodians is necessary for the preservation of order, for the building is then packed with pilgrims and visitors; when often feeling and sectarian rivalry run high, and under the excitement disgraceful quarrels and even bloodshed have taken place. It has been often remarked that it is a wonder that the exhibition should be allowed, and especially that the priests and patriarchs, many of whom are supposed to be men of learning and enlightenment, should so debase their office as to countenance, much less take part in, the disgraceful ceremony. While not in any way approving of the circumstance, we must make allowance for the fact that it is an old ceremony, and that to discontinue it would cause untold opposition and angry feeling from the members of those Churches taking part, especially the more ignorant portion of them, who would regard such prohibition as an infringement and violation of their rights. And we must add that very few writers are really aware of what takes place, or what place the ceremony takes in the participant's ritual, and so misconstrue the motives of the clergy for continuing it.

The writer had the privilege of a personal interview with the Greek and Armenian patriarchs a few years since, and after a prolonged audience with the former one morning, during which he asked many questions regarding European affairs, the writer said before parting: "You have been pleased to ask me many questions. Would you mind if I ask you one?" "Not at all," he replied. "Ask anything you like." "Then," I said, "can you explain to me the miracle of the holy fire?" "Ah! ah!" he said, and turned on me a pitying glance, "you are just like the rest of them



ARCH OF ECCE HOMO



INTERIOR VIEW, ARCH OF ECCE HOMO

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POTTERY SMASHERS



BLIND BEGGARS



MAHOMEDAN AT PRAYER



THE CALL TO PRAYER



REMAINS OF OLD MOAT



NEAR JAFFA GATE

[To face p. 64]

in calling it the miracle of the holy fire; I have been much amused, though at the same time grieved, by all your writers calling it a miracle. Don't you know," he asked, "that we do not claim any miracle about it at all?" "But," I said, "I know that many people believe that you claim that it is miraculous, and most certainly during the darker ages it was supposed to be a miraculous event. Do not many of the pilgrims regard it as such now?" "No doubt," he said, "many of the more ignorant do so regard it, but we do not tell them it is so at the present time." I protested that it was a pity that such, even if they are ignorant, should continue to be deluded with regard to it, and asked: "Why do your clergy not disillusion them, and let them know exactly what does take place?" "So far as we can, we do," he replied; "and the majority of the more enlightened of our people know that we look upon this ceremony as a symbol—as an emblem of the spread of the light of the Gospel throughout the world, just as in the Middle Ages passion-plays were frequent, and were the poor man's Bible, for at that time the poor could not read; the performances of the plays were the means taken to bring before the minds of the ignorant the events of the sacred volume. Why," he asked, "have you never heard that even in your St. Paul's in London they used to liberate a dove as an emblem of the descent of the Holy Spirit?" I told him I had never heard of it, but I have since ascertained it to be a fact.

He then described to me exactly what took place: how that they waited in the Greek church until the feelings of the pilgrims were raised to a pitch of fervour, and then he and two other patriarchs went into the Chapel of the Angels; after waiting there some time, till expectation ran high, he, as the senior patriarch in point of power, would light two tapers, and, crossing his arms, would hand one to each of the other patriarchs present, who would then thrust them through the holes in the walls, upon which the pilgrims would, with eager rivalry, light up their candles they had brought for the purpose, and after allowing the

others who were farthest away to light theirs from their own burning candles, they would put them out, and take them to their homes to be lighted up again at their death and placed beside their dead bodies. There is no doubt, however, that the majority of the pilgrims are deluded, and do believe that the event is a miraculous manifestation; but such was the explanation given me by one highest in authority, he being the leader who takes the most prominent part in the transaction.

I have been informed that in former ages black threads soaked in alcohol were suspended from the roof, and that these, being invisible in the partial darkness, were lighted in the gallery above, when the flame would appear to run down in space; but I was not told when this practice was discontinued.

Leaving the church, we see on the opposite side of the courtyard the minaret of a mosque; this is the real mosque of Omar. When the caliph Omar entered Jerusalem in A.D. 637, he generously left the Christians in the peaceable possession of their churches, and when his soldiers wished to be allowed to pray in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Omar refused their request, on the ground that, it being a Christian sanctuary, conflicts might arise in future times. But he himself went and prayed near by, and a mosque was erected on the spot, so that the Moslems might have a holy place as near to the Sepulchre as possible. The buildings exactly opposite the front entrance of the church are dormitories for the Greek monks, attached to which is a hospice for pilgrims at Easter-time; and the hospice is available for the accommodation of general travellers at other times.

Leaving the square by the wide steps to the right, and then turning to the left up what is called Christian Street—a street which was formerly inhabited by Christians of various sects, but which is now mainly occupied by Jewish dealers—we see in a passage to the left the Greek Church of St. John the Forerunner; this church is remarkable as being built over a church now lying some twenty feet below the present level, and which has recently been cleared out.

It is a Byzantine building, and, like the church above, it consists of three apses and a western corridor. It had been for ages covered up and forgotten; but the excavations which have revealed the church have revealed also the ancient ground-level, and is another instance showing how the city has been built up on the ruins of former ages.

Now, by crossing David Street and ascending by the narrow passage opposite Christian Street, we shall soon see in front of us the entrance of another very interesting church—the church of the Syrians. It is interesting as being the only church in Jerusalem where the services are repeated in the Aramaic languages, the dialect of the time of our Lord, and also as being built—according to tradition—over the site of the house of John Mark, where the disciples were assembled praying at the time of the miraculous deliverance from prison of the Apostle Peter; and the door is said to be that at which Peter knocked when the disciples—notwithstanding that they had been praying for his release—were so astonished at his presence among them that they thought it must be his spirit. Dr. Schick considered this to be an authentic site. The interior of the church is lavishly hung with lamps; there is an old font, and a rude portrait in oils of the Virgin, said to have been painted by Luke the Evangelist. The rooms of the convent attached contain some ancient MSS.

We now turn westward up some narrow lanes, and see on our right the premises of the London Jews' Society, the cellars of which are claimed to be the prison of Peter. On looking over the walls of these premises, we can see down into David Street below, and this shows that these buildings are erected on the ancient wall, two towers of which were discovered among the débris when the foundations of the present structure were being dug. Almost opposite we find the Maronite church; and near by, to the south-west, is the crusading Church of St. James the son of Alpheus, in ruins, and also the Chapel of St. Thomas.

We next come out into the street which leads to the Armenian church, convent, and extensive buildings on

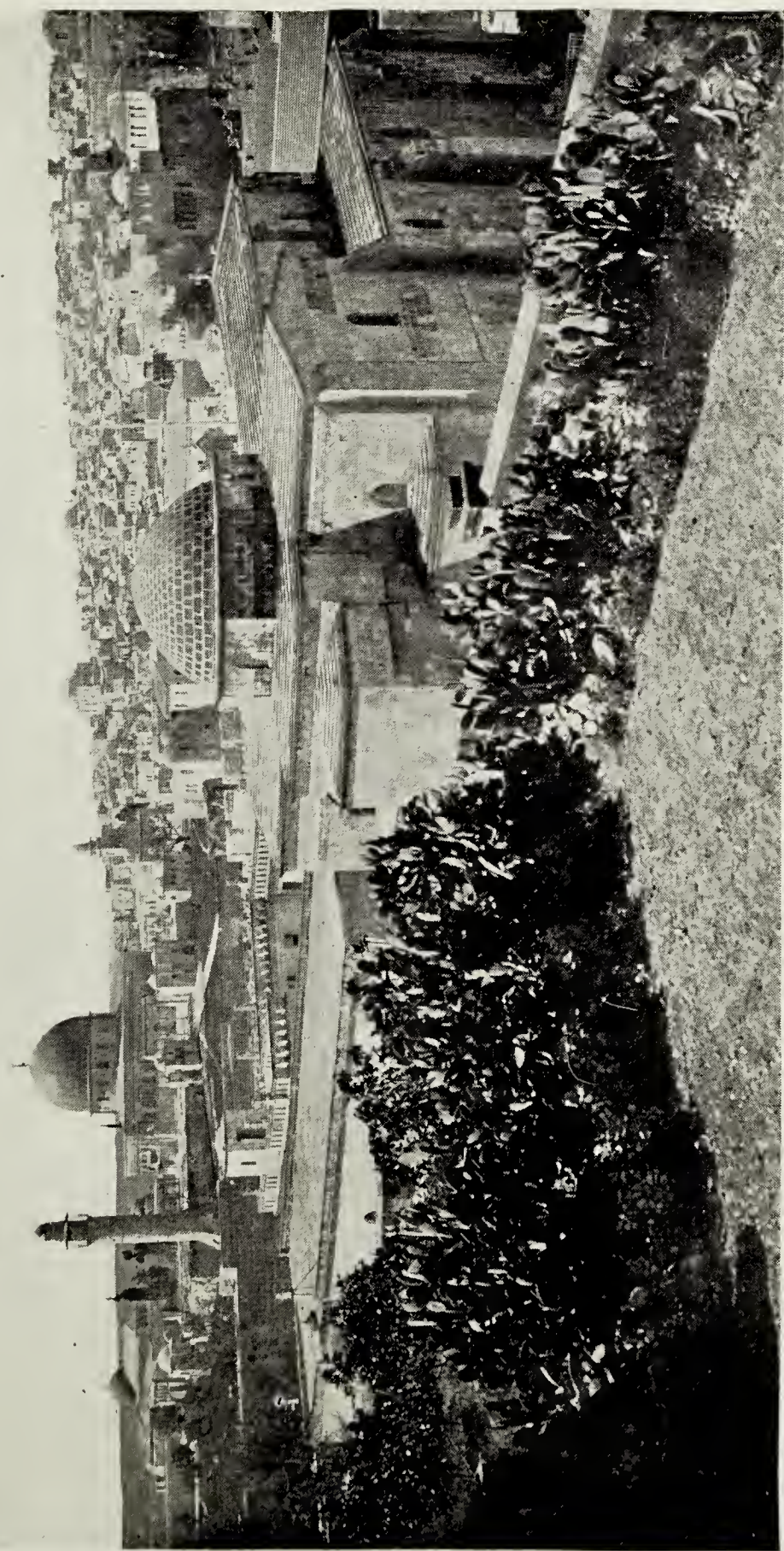
Mount Zion. Some very old tamarisk trees overhang the square in front of the church—the descendants probably of those which adorned the pleasure grounds of Herod's palace.

The church covers the traditional site of the martyrdom of the Apostle James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, and contains many relics, including the Apostle's episcopal chair and the richly inlaid with mother-of-pearl shrine, marking the place where the Apostle's head was buried after his martyrdom.

At the entrance of the church some planks of hard wood are suspended by ropes which formerly served the purpose of gongs for calling the people to church before they were allowed to use bells, in conformity with the terms of the treaty made by the caliph Omar with the Christians when Jerusalem surrendered to him in A.D. 637. We can now return to the open square which forms the market-place, leading to David Street; we notice here, in front of the Austrian post-office, peasant women with garden produce for sale, and the wonderful broccoli offered are a testimony to the rich fertility of the soil around.

Here, too, we can see Mahomedan ladies come to the market-place shopping, and we notice that they are closely veiled, for a respectable Moslem lady would never appear in the public streets with her face uncovered. This is a survival of a custom of Bible times, and a man here never sees the face of his wife till he has married her; so that we may understand how it was poor Jacob was led into marrying Leah instead of Rachel: she was so closely veiled he could not tell which was which of the sisters, and thus was the dupe of Laban's cunning trick.

A man in Jerusalem would not know his own wife if he met her in the street, and we cannot tell, when we see a lady thus veiled, if she is old or young, pretty or ugly. We know we think it to be a mournful and dingy-looking covering they wear when in the streets, but when they are in their homes we should find, if we could see them there, that they are by no means insensible to the charms of fine



VIEW OF JERUSALEM FROM CITY WALL, SHOWING CHURCH OF ST. ANNE AND MOSQUE OF OMAR

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apparel, and they take great pains to make themselves look attractive to their husbands.

The writer once unexpectedly saw the interior of a rich man's harem; and on another occasion that of a chieftain's tent, where the ladies were sitting and reclining on a divan, dressed in such a manner that he thought he never saw anything more beautiful. "The king's daughters are all glorious within," says the Psalmist; and if we may take the words to typify the regard with which Christ looks upon His Church, His bride, His love, we see how great is His regard for her—how He looks upon her as "precious above rubies," as "the apple of His eye," as "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing"; "bright as the sun, fair as the moon, and resplendent as an army with banners." But although the ladies are so closely veiled that the men cannot see their faces, they can see through their veils the men, and sometimes—for human nature is the same all the world over—they see a man they admire, or take a sort of liking to, and they have a naughty little dodge to let him know it. We know that in our own country, if young people wish to get acquainted, they find some means of meeting each other quite accidentally, and the young man, politely raising his hat, says in the kindest of tones, "Good-evening, miss"; and she, by the sweetest of smiles, lets him know that his attentions are welcome. But in the East no such indications would be available; the young man couldn't tell if the young lady smiled or not, and although she dare not uncover her face to let him see her smile, she just uncovers one eye, and that is equivalent to a smile or a wink, or a little effort at flirtation. And oh, the sparkle there is in that one eye! The young man can see enough in that one eye to let him know she is just the damsel he wants to make him happy—that there is no other girl in all the world so sweet. "Thou hast ravished mine heart with one of thine eyes," says Solomon in his love-song; and we can understand the meaning of the phrase better now.

Another custom which recalls many Bible incidents is

the practice of the men falling upon each other's necks, when they happen to meet in the streets, and kissing each other—a practice by no means uncommon on the Continent; but as it is rare with us, it awakens our interest and amusement, and we think it somewhat strange.

Indeed, an English maiden lady, long a resident in Jerusalem, who afterwards wrote up her impressions of the place, alludes to the practice as something extraordinary, and she says: "The men kiss each other in the streets—really kiss"; and she quotes the opinion of Mark Twain, with whom she agrees, that "men are kissing animals."

Since writing those impressions, however, an American gentleman visited Jerusalem, saw her, laid his heart at her feet, which was joyfully accepted; and I have no doubt that the lady has found out before now that American gentlemen, as well as Palestine men, are kissing animals.

In the Bible narratives, we remember that Esau kissed his brother Jacob; Joseph kissed his brethren when he made himself known to them in Egypt; the forgiving father kissed his prodigal son on his return home; and, indeed, numerous other instances, too well known to need mention, could be given. But it is important to remember that the practice of kissing each other's faces only takes place between equals—a brother a brother, a father a son, a friend a friend, etc. An inferior in position would never think of kissing a superior in this way; in such a case the salutation would be made by kneeling and kissing the tips of the fingers, or even the garment, of the person considered his superior in rank; and this is finely brought out in the Messianic Psalm: "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry," etc.

I notice the custom more particularly here, however, because in the Epistles Christians are five times over commanded to kiss each other; and it cannot be doubted, as stated by Mr. Niel,¹ that the exhortation thus given, and four times repeated, is in its true meaning as binding upon Christians to-day as in the times of the Apostles. But we

¹ *Strange Figures*, by James Niel, M.A.

must remember that kissing is the ordinary and usual form of salutation among equals in the East, and answers to our method of heartily shaking each other by the hand. And there is no doubt that if the Apostles were living amongst us in our own land and age, they would charge us to "greet one another with a hearty shake of the hand"—that being our mode of salutation, and answering to the kiss in the East.

And the great truth that this brings out is that the Apostles enjoined Christians to regard each other as equals, as brethren—of one rank before God, members of the same body, children of the same Father. "Let the brother who is low glory in his exaltation, but the rich in his humiliation." This is the glorious truth contained in the words: "Salute ye one another with a loving kiss." This truth the great Duke of Wellington understood, surely, when, as he was approaching the communion rail one day, he saw a poor man respectfully stepping on one side to allow him to go to the front place. "No," said the Duke, gently placing his hand on the poor man's shoulder, "we are all equal here." The Apostles repeatedly enjoined Christians to consider themselves as belonging to the great brotherhood of saved men—fellow-servants of one Master: the rich are not to despise the poor, or to seek the highest place. And this spiritual equality is most plainly taught by the Master Himself: how He rebuked those who wished for the highest place. "But he that is greatest among you," He says in effect, "shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted."

Gathering His disciples around Him, He said: "All ye are brethren." Around Him He would have His whole Church gathered in one universal brotherhood, to whom a common ruin in sin, a common redemption by His blood, and a common renewal by His Spirit, has levelled down all earthly distinctions of birth, wealth, rank, or intellect, and brought all alike—as sons and daughters of the Heavenly Father—joint heirs with Himself into the fellow-

ship of the saints, equal in dignity, in destiny, and in privilege—a Church of Christ, children of the same Father, and, in a word, perfect in one.

Just opposite the market-place, if we ascend the steps of the Hotel Central, we shall see behind the houses which line David Street a very large pool. This is called the pool of Hezekiah; it is certainly very ancient, and this is the pool to which the water was conveyed by the channel from the upper pool of Gihon, to which we have already referred.

The houses round the pool are of all heights, and over them, at the far corner, we can see the grand dome of the Holy Sepulchre. We now descend the busy thoroughfare of David Street, lined on either side with mean shops, and thronged with people of all nationalities. A little way down we come to the corn-market, and note with interest the way in which the corn is measured. The measure is not, as with us, lightly filled, and struck off level, but shaken down, pressed down, and then piled up till no more will stay on; and that is considered fair, and is, indeed, here legal measure. How we are reminded of the words of the Saviour: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again"!

A little farther down a street runs across the one we are in, and, though very narrow now, this is the line of the wide street which in Herod's time ran across the city, and which he adorned with columns on either side, traces and fragments of which still remain. We now come to a native coffee-shop, which was once a khan, the thoroughfare now leading right through it. It is covered in with an arched roof, rising from massive ancient columns, and seems to have been at one time a cruciform church. Tradition says that it was once really a place of worship, built on the site of the house of Zebedee, the father of James and John. It seems strange, at first sight, that the Crusaders should have selected this as a site for a church, seeing that Zebedee's home was on the shores of Galilee's lake; but

it is explained that Zebedee used to supply the fish for the priests' household, and therefore had a town house in Jerusalem.

Continuing our walk down David Street, we turn off on the right just before reaching the bottom, and, going through some narrow and very dirty passages, we come to the court of the wall of wailing, or Jews' wailing-place.

Ever since the fall of Jerusalem the Israelites have mourned in deepest sorrow over their national griefs, and it is to this spot—being the nearest place they are allowed to approach to where they believe the Holy of Holies once stood—they come every day, and especially on Fridays, to lament over the destruction of their city and the defilement of their temple. It is a most affecting sight to watch them, as they come and weep, and kiss the stones, and chant in mournful monotone their litanies. The seventy-ninth Psalm is often read aloud: "O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance; Thy Holy Temple have they defiled; they have laid Jerusalem on heaps." Frequently they leave their written prayers in the interstices of the wall, and there is no doubt whatever about the sincerity of their lamentations.

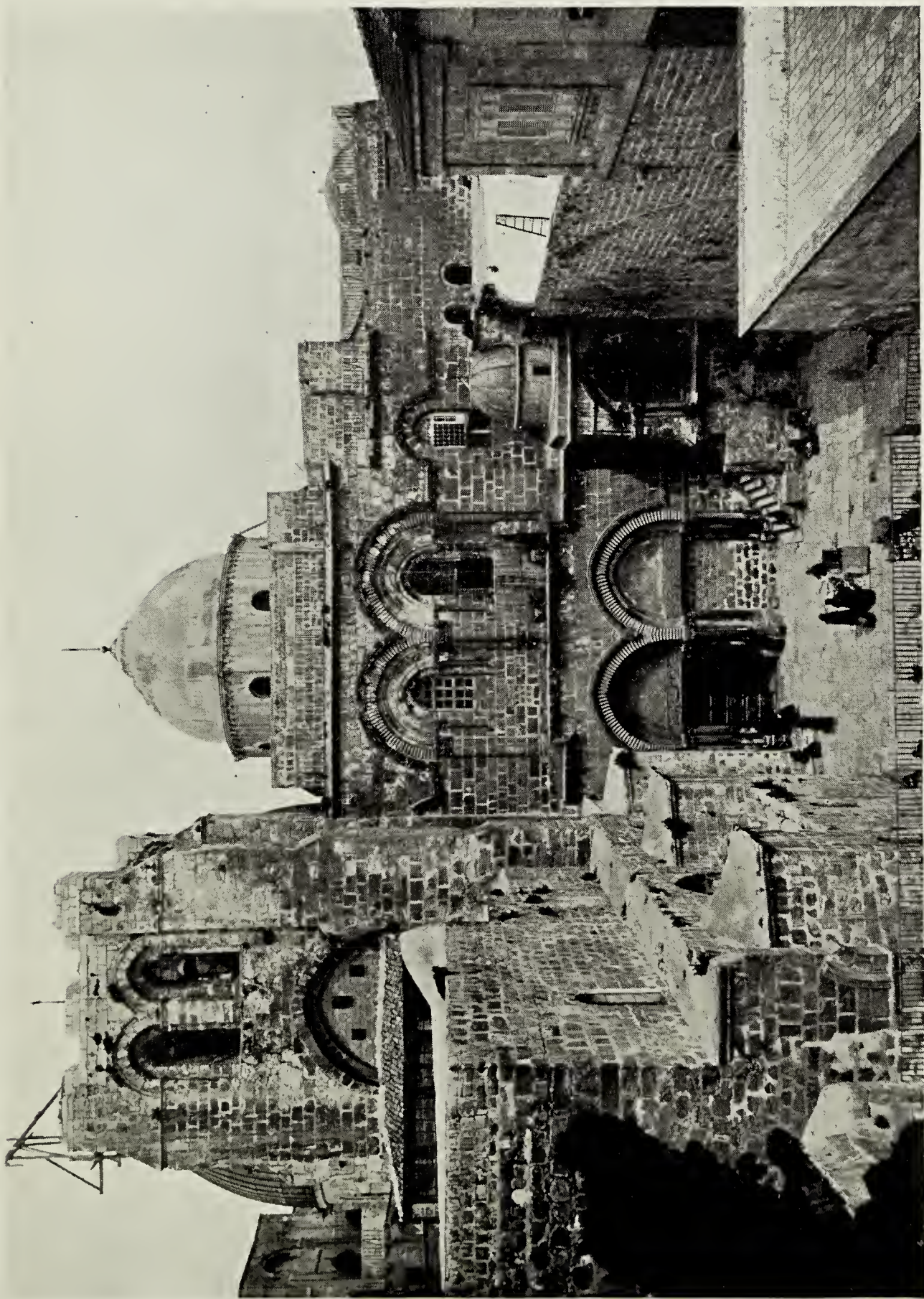
Our small photograph shows a woman in a paroxysm of grief, and we have seen in the driest weather the stones of the courtyard where they stood wet with their tears. They evidently repeat the experience of the prophet Jeremiah, when he said: "O that mine head were a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night over the daughters of Jerusalem."

This portion of the wall is very ancient, and is believed by them to be a portion of the wall of Solomon's temple. The lower courses of stones are very large, and it is likely that they did form some portion of the walls of the temple. The present floor of the courtyard here is very much higher than the ancient level, for Warren found, when he sunk a shaft here, that the wall reached to a depth of seventy-eight feet below the present surface, and the stones of the wall are all large ones, like the bottom courses of

those we see before us. We notice that a number of nails are driven into the joints of the wall, and we at first wonder what can be the meaning of this, for, as far as we can see, they are of no earthly use there. But there is a pathetic interest attaching to this, as the Jews have driven these nails in there to show that they have an interest in the proprietorship of the wall.

Thus is explained the passage in Ezra ix. 8: "And to give us a nail in His holy place." The writer was once entertained in the house of a native, and asked if the house were his own. "Well, no," he replied; "but we have a nail in the wall"—by which he meant that he owned a share in the proprietorship. Much of the property in Palestine has been divided up among families; thus it often happens that there are as many as twenty-four shares in a house, and until all those shares are bought up—often an impossible procedure, as some one or other is unwilling to sell—the house cannot become exclusively one's property. But a tenant is very anxious to buy a share, as then he can never be turned out, or have his rent increased, so long as he keeps the interest on the other shares paid up; hence it is very desirable that he should have "a nail in the wall."

Leaving the wailing-place, and threading our way along the passages southward, we soon come to an open place partly used as gardens, where fine cauliflowers are grown for the market, and which gardens are enclosed by impenetrable hedges of giant cactus. Following the path through these, we see before us the city wall, with the gate now called the Dung Gate—a very appropriate name, by the way; but, leaving this, and turning up the path just inside the walls to the right, we soon find, on looking back, a beautiful view across the valley we have just traversed, and which was formerly known as the Tyropean valley, now much filled up; beyond this is the mosque of Omar and temple area, and away farther still the Mount of Olives is seen. Now, looking across to the wall of the temple enclosure, we can see jutting out from the face of the wall



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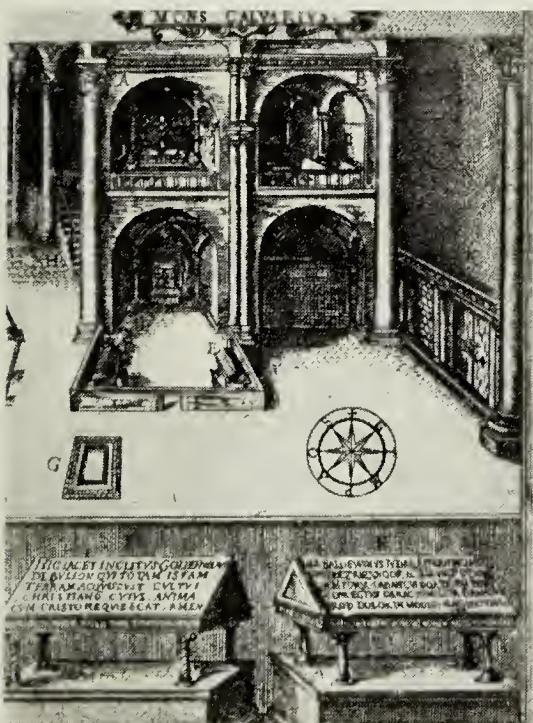
CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE



CHURCH OF HOLY SEPULCHRE



INTERIOR JEWISH SYNAGOGUE



OLD PRINT OF HOLY SEPULCHRE



GREEK PATRIARCH



CHAPEL OF ST. HELENA



COURTYARD OF HOLY SEPULCHRE
CHURCH

[To face p. 76]

a long triangular stone; this remarkable relic of antiquity is now known as Robinson's Arch, because it was discovered by that explorer, and identified by him as forming the spring of one of the arches of the bridge which spanned the valley from the temple to the Asmonean palace, which stood on the precipitous side of Mount Zion, near where we are standing now, and which must have been three hundred and fifty yards in length. The spring of Robinson's Arch, and the wall in which it is embedded, appears of an older period than the time of Herod, and may have formed a portion of the bridge leading from the palace on Mount Zion to the temple in Solomon's time. Retracing our steps back to David Street, and turning to the left, we soon come to the western entrance of the temple area, called the Gate of the Cotton Merchants, so named because under the vaulted roof of the tunnel, or covered way, the shops of these merchants were placed.

Just before entering this vaulted tunnel, however, we turn aside to notice a very beautiful ancient fountain, now useless, but seeming to show that at one time Jerusalem must have been more conveniently supplied with water than now.

The vault through which we pass into the temple area is a very dingy, dirty place; but, emerging at the other end, a vision of wondrous beauty bursts upon the view, for the building before us, standing on its raised marble platform, is considered after Mecca the most sacred, and after Cordova the most beautiful, of all the Moslems' sacred shrines. It stands in an area embracing one-fourth of the size of Jerusalem within the walls, and occupying thirty-five acres in extent. On our left in entering we see in the far corner the site of Pilate's house, now used as a barracks; and it was here the Apostle Paul was addressing the multitude when the mob sought to murder him, and where he was rescued by the soldiers who suddenly appeared upon the scene, no doubt having come through the subway from the fortress of Antonia. Turning to the right, we see the large building called the mosque of El-Aksa, which

was formerly a Christian church, built in the sixth century by Justinian, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary, but, of course, subsequently converted into a Moslem sanctuary.

But the great centre of attraction here is the mosque of Omar, as it is generally called, although its correct name is the Dome of the Rock. It is an octagonal-shaped building, each side being sixty-six feet long, and the circumference of the entire building would be nearly five hundred feet. The lower portion of the exterior walls is cased with marble, and the upper portion with Persian encaustic tiles of a pale blue on a white ground, which gives a beautiful effect. The whole of the central portion is covered by a dome immediately over the sacred rock, upon which, in the Jewish period, the sacrifices were offered, and which stood in front of the entrance of the first temple built by Solomon. It appears to have been a place of sacrifice from a very early period, as, according to Jewish tradition, Abraham and Melchizedek sacrificed here; and this is where David purchased the threshing-floor from Araunah the Jebusite, and built an altar on it. He also enjoined his son Solomon to build a temple here, which temple must have been very massive and beautiful; but it had a chequered history, and had later to be rebuilt by Nehemiah, though on a smaller scale, after the return from the Captivity; and it was again built on a grand scale by Herod. After the fall of the city during the Roman rule we find the site again a heap of ruins. Then Hadrian erected here a temple to Jupiter, and placed a statue of that god within it, when he rebuilt Jerusalem.

When Jerusalem surrendered to the caliph Omar in 637, he requested to be taken to the site of the ancient temple, and found it covered with a heap of dung and other rubbish, which had been heaped upon it by the Christians in derision of the Jews—so wonderfully had the prophecy been fulfilled: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Omar caused the rubbish to be cleared away, the place purified, and a shrine to be built in front of the rock.



THE TEMPLE AREA FROM TOWER OF ANTONIA

But it was not until fifty years after Omar's time that the present building was commenced, and mediæval historians were led into the common but excusable error that, because Omar built a shrine there, it was he who built, or at any rate commenced to build, the erection which stands to-day, and which, in consequence, has got to be called by his name. It was built as we see it now by the caliph Abd-el-Melek, and the Arabic inscription in the interior so records the fact. The original dome of the building subsequently fell down, and was again restored according to the same design.

It was not until the year 1862 that any Christian was allowed to enter within its precincts, or, indeed, any part of the temple area; and an inscription, now shown in the Constantinople Museum, was placed over one of its gates, giving the warning that any such entering would be killed. In that year, however, our late King Edward, when he was Prince of Wales, visited Jerusalem, and the Sultan, as a special favour, granted him a firman to enter, and with this act the absolute exclusiveness of the Mahomedan sacred enclosures was broken down, for since that time visitors are freely permitted to enter, on an order from their consul and taking with them a soldier as guard.

The walls of the interior are beautifully adorned with coloured marbles, mosaics, encaustic tiles, and stained glass windows; the capitals of the columns supporting the dome are enriched with gilding, the floor is covered with costly carpetings, and around the base of the dome are Kufic inscriptions and texts from the Koran, one of which reads: "Jesus, the Son of Mary, is one sent by God, and His word, whom He sent upon Mary; and His Spirit." We also find the name of Jesus adorning the interior of the mosque of Muhamed Ali at Cairo, so that Carlyle was not far wrong in calling Mahomedanism a kind of Christianity. It is no doubt a curious mixture of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity; and there is no doubt that it was Mahomed's first intention, not only to protest against the savage superstitions of the Arabs, but also against the

formalism of the Jews and the schisms of the Christians.¹ There is a fine wrought-iron screen protecting the rock, which is left bare, and in which there is a hole through which the blood from the sacrifices ran. A chamber is shown beneath the rock, in which tradition points out Solomon's praying-place, and there are many other absurd legends retailed for the credence of visitors.

The mosque of El-Aksa is also a fine building worth inspecting, but there is little of the original building of Justinian's time left. The pulpit, or prayer niche, is beautifully carved in wood; it is richly inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl, and was placed here by Saladin himself.

There is a fine stone slab in the pavement of the nave not far from the entrance which resembles the monument of some knight—the church was at one time allotted to the Knights Templars—but the Moslem custodian says it is the tomb of one of the sons of Aaron; there are, however, we find, many fantastic legends connected with every part of the building.

In the far corner of the grounds on the south-east a flight of steps lead down to what are known as Solomon's stables; at the bottom of the stairs the Moslems point out a stone which they say is the cradle of Christ, but which any one can see is a Roman niche for a statue. The vaults are chiefly interesting as showing what vast substructures were needed to bring this part of the slope of the hill to a level to form the platform above. There are rings let in the stonework by which to fasten the halters of the horses, and stone mangers; but these are not thought to be older than crusading times. The original doorways to these vaults, from Ophel, are now filled up. In the grounds between the mosques of Omar and El-Aksa are vast underground cisterns, and there is a beautiful open-air Saracenic pulpit from which a vast congregation could be harangued. The interior of the Golden Gate, which is here thickened out very considerably, should be noticed before leaving the

¹ See Condor's *Jerusalem*.

area, also the fine view of the Mount of Olives to be obtained from the walls.

We can now leave the area by the exit near St. Stephen's Gate, and proceed along by the path outside of the eastern wall towards the south to inspect the Golden Gate.

But in making our exit through St. Stephen's Gate we notice with some surprise four roughly carved lions in the walls, two on either side of the gate, and, as we know that the representation of animals in ornamentation is abhorrent to the Moslems, we wonder the reason for these being placed here.

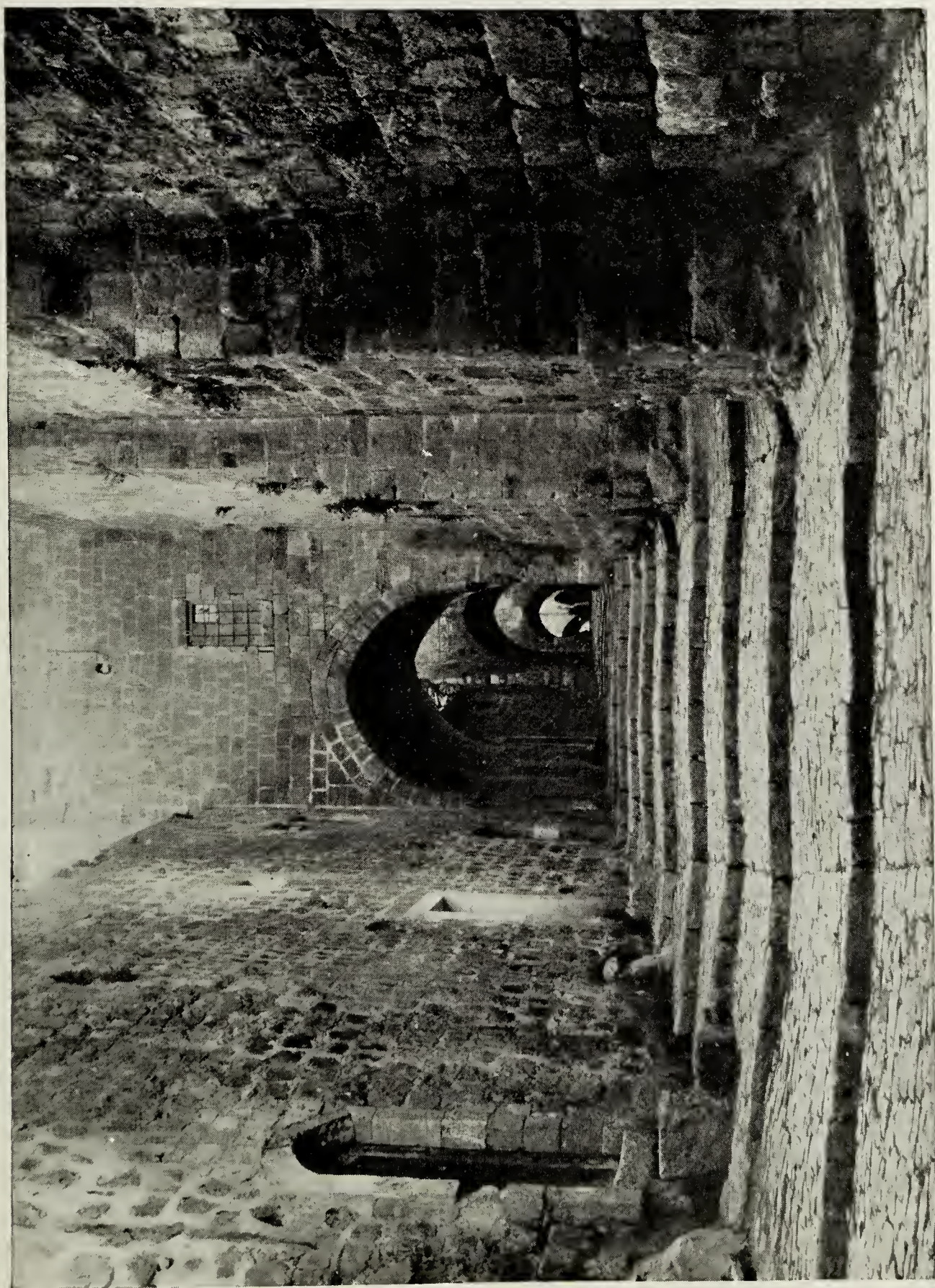
An ignorant but loquacious dragoman tells us that when Christ entered through this gateway these lions roared at Him. But we know, of course, that neither this wall as it stands to-day nor the gateway was here in His time, and the statement of the guides must be placed in the same category as much of the other information they give. The truth is, they were ordered to be placed here by the sultan Selim to commemorate a dream he had that led to the restoration of the walls of Jerusalem, which he found in ruins when he conquered Palestine in 1517. It is said that he was greatly troubled by the turbulent and unruly attitude of the populace, many of whom, being on the verge of starvation, were committing acts of violence. And one night he had a frightful dream—he thought he was being torn to pieces by four lions. He consulted a wise man as to the meaning of this dream, and was told that the lions represented the enraged people, who were starving. He was further advised that if he undertook some great work, so as to give the people employment whereby they could earn sustenance, their anger would be appeased, and he would earn the goodwill of his people and bring a blessing on his government. Acting on this advice, he ordered the walls to be rebuilt to provide the people with work. They began to build at St. Stephen's Gate, working both north and south, till the parties met at the farther side; and the lions were inserted at the starting-point to commemorate the incident which suggested the restoration.

Now, passing along towards the south, we follow the path through the Moslem cemetery. The whole of the land near the east wall of the city is used as a burying-ground by the Mahomedans, and the females come here every Friday to sit by the graves of their departed, often bringing their children with them, and mourn and weep, especially if the departed one is the husband of the mourner and the father and supporter of the family. Sometimes a friend or neighbour accompanies the mourner to condole with her, and it may be still said: "She goeth to the grave to weep there."

The walls here, we notice, are of quite inferior workmanship; apparently they are composed of the rubble and ruin of former times, and in some places the fragments of columns are inserted, and where these are too long they project from the face of the wall. The most glaring instance of this is in the long projecting piece near the farther corner, which has given the excuse for the Moslems to build up the legend that Mahomed will sit astride this stone on the Day of Judgment.

The Golden Gate, which we have come here especially to see, is also, we notice, built up with a mixture of ancient material; for instance, we notice there is an inscription of Hadrian's time built in upside down, but when it was built it is impossible to say. Popular tradition connects it with the Gate Beautiful of the New Testament, where Peter and John cured the cripple of his lameness. The Gate Beautiful, however, probably stood somewhere within the enclosure nearer the temple, the exact spot it is impossible to locate; but the pilgrim Antonius of Placentia, who came to Jerusalem about A.D. 567, says he found "what was once the Beautiful Gate in ruins, with the threshold and posts still standing." It cannot, therefore, have been erected by Justinian, as has been thought, as Justinian's work is of an earlier period.

The reason it is called the Golden Gate may be accounted for by changing the Greek word *horaia*, meaning "beautiful," into the Latin *aurea*, which means "golden." The



OLD STREET IN JERUSALEM

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ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH



RENT ROCKS ON CALVARY



A GIPSY ENCAMPMENT

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tradition, that the reason for the closing up of the opening of the gate with solid masonry is because the Moslems have a presentiment that the Christians will endeavour to take the city by entering through this gateway, can be traced back to the fifteenth century. Whether that be the actual reason or not, the fact remains that it has been closed up for something; and it seems a fulfilment of the words of Ezek. xlv. 1-2: "Then He brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary, which looketh toward the east; and it was shut. Then said the Lord unto me, This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it." As the gate on this site in the time of Ezekiel was the only gateway in the east wall, the literal fulfilment of the words is somewhat remarkable. The interior of this gateway we have already seen from the temple area, and the ornate columns supporting the roof may have been the posts supporting the lintel of the Gate Beautiful in Christ's day.

CHAPTER VI

AROUND THE SUBURBS OF JERUSALEM

ALTHOUGH many of the tourists who visit Palestine spend only three or four days in the Holy City, with perhaps two others for the visits to Jericho and Bethlehem, and in consequence see—often under very disadvantageous conditions—the stock sights of the place in that time; yet there is plenty to see that is of the greatest interest, not merely in the city itself, but also in the surrounding districts that will well repay a longer stay and more leisurely examination. A very pleasant morning or afternoon's ramble will be to the Convent of the Cross; we descend from the main Jaffa road towards the west, then, passing on our right the cemetery in which is situated the upper pool of Gihon, we go on towards a windmill on the crest of the hill. Just before reaching the windmill we notice on our right a huge ruin, or rather an unfinished building, which recalls to mind the parable of a man who commenced to build without having counted the cost, and was unable to finish. But on closer examination we see that the building was intended for something more than a house, for its dimensions are immense.

The building was, in fact, commenced by a lady—rumour says an English lady of title, but who called herself "Mrs. Gordon." She wished to erect a building in which to house the one hundred and forty-four thousand who should return to Jerusalem at the Millennium, and these unfinished walls are the memento of her folly. It has been often noticed, especially by those long resident in Jerusalem, that there is no place which so attracts cranks as the Holy City. It is well known that there is a kind of

insanity which takes the form of religious mania, sometimes mild, sometimes more pronounced, and persons afflicted with this failing are attracted to this place. There is said to be one old lady living here who constantly keeps her kettle boiling, as she wishes to be the first to welcome the Lord at His second coming with a cup of tea.

Others there are with less innocent ambitions: there is one man who walks the streets, wearing long hair, who announces that he is Christ revisiting the place; another is Elijah; and another—a woman—says she is the Virgin Mary. Several of the useful enterprises here had their origin in some religious scheme or whim, by persons who fortunately recovered their senses when the whim proved impracticable. We have already noticed, as an instance of this, the failure of the American colony at Jaffa, which, with other equally visionary schemes of a later date, have developed into important industries.

In the instance of this building it was stopped for want of funds, as the lady in question left it for a time, and spent her resources in raising and equipping a regiment to help the Servians when they fought the Turks and regained their independence; and also because—the lady having fought against the Turks—her project was regarded with some political suspicion.

The buildings have now been acquired by the Greek Church, and will probably develop into a huge convent or hospice.

Continuing our walk past the windmill along a rough road, we soon see before us in the valley below the Church and Convent of the Cross. This is said to be built over the spot where the tree grew from which the cross was made, and a hole is still shown in the ground behind the high altar from which the root of the tree was torn. The building is largely used as a seminary, or preparatory college for students qualifying for priests of the Greek Church; it stands in a very pleasant situation, and is well worth the hour's walk.

Another walk or drive worth undertaking is to the

pleasant village of Ain Karim, about six miles away, where there is a splendid spring of pure water, called the well of Mary. The church in the old part of the village is built over a cave in which, according to tradition, John the Baptist was born; and in another part of the village another church marks the site of the house in which Elizabeth and Zacharias lived, and where Elizabeth was visited by her cousin the Virgin Mary when the latter sang her *Magnificat* of praise.

The site of the first-named church and convent was restored to the Catholic Church by the intervention of King Louis XIV of France, after having been used by the Moslems as a cow-shed, because of the tradition that the cave was the birthplace of the Forerunner. The Scriptures do not mention where was the birthplace of the Baptist, and modern discovery—unfortunately for Ain Karim—destroys the tradition, for by the discovery of the celebrated map of Madeba, made in mosaic work in the floor of a church in the fourth century at that place, a church is marked in it, at Jutta near Hebron, as covering the site of the birthplace of John the Baptist.

Although no trace of the church could be seen at that place above-ground, yet the fact of its being marked on this map at that early age gave sufficient interest for the site to be excavated; the ruins and foundations of the church were found on the spot indicated, and archæologists are now pretty well agreed that Jutta has a greater claim to be regarded as the birthplace of John the Forerunner than Ain Karim. Still, it is a pleasant place for a visit, a great deal of the district belongs to the various Churches, and, being well watered and cultivated, besides being charmingly situated, it forms a fine suburban resort for Jerusalem. It was here that General Gordon came and lived during a portion of his stay in Palestine. There is a large Franciscan seminary for girls here, established by the efforts of Father Ratisbonne, who himself is buried near by; and several characteristic watch-towers to protect the vineyards are seen round about.



ALTAR OF ANCIENT CHURCH ST. JOHN



ENTRANCE TO ARMENIAN CHURCH



ENTRANCE TO SYRIAN CHURCH



INTERIOR OF SYRIAN CHURCH



THE MARKET-PLACE



VEGETABLE MARKET

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TYROPEAN VALLEY

Another interesting ramble is around the northern suburbs, and, starting by the road leading north from the Damascus Gate, we may first visit the "garden tomb." The road leads past the new German college, and we take the first turn to the right, which, we find, ends in a *cul-de-sac*, the end having been blocked by the wall, recently built, enclosing the Mussulman cemetery. But there is a doorway in the wall on the right just before the end of the road is reached; we knock at this, and an attendant inside opens the door. A charge of half-a-franc is made for admission, and this is devoted to the upkeep of the place; the door, we find, leads into a garden, and in this garden is situated the tomb we have come to see; hence it is called the garden tomb.

After the opening of the tomb entrance, as before mentioned, by General Gordon, an extraordinary amount of interest was aroused by the publication of the circumstance; and the many remarkable coincidences leading to the conclusion of its being the possible tomb of the Lord led many to urge that steps should be taken in order to preserve the tomb from destruction, and keep the garden and surroundings intact. An influential committee was thereupon formed in England to take means to purchase the garden, which belonged to a Greek. The sum required was collected, the ground bought, and enclosed by a wall; and then further excavations took place with the object of discovering the rolling stone, which, it was thought, might be buried near by.

They never found the rolling stone; but they uncovered the face of the rock, and at the entrance to the tomb found the trough, or chase, cut in the solid rock in which the stone had rolled.

They found also buried beneath the surface ruins and foundations of an extensive building, which the writer at the time took to be, and still believes were, the foundations of an early Christian church. Some persons have supposed them to be remains of crusading times, but, having taken a series of photographs of them before they were

stupidly covered over, he believes he has the strongest proof that they were in existence before the third century, and that they were the foundations of a church erected by the early Christians, which church they called the Church of the Resurrection, and as a memorial of the place where they believed the Lord arose from His tomb. There were numerous graves in the vicinity, and during the excavations, which I watched from the beginning, I saw the bones unearthed and carted away with the rubbish. Near by, the graves were covered with three flat gravestones, which I also saw; two of these contained inscriptions in Greek, one to Nonus, and one to Onesimus, "deacons of the Church of the Resurrection, buried near my Lord." These stones have now been let in the ground of the adjoining St. Stephen's Church, where they are shown to Catholic pilgrims; but they are not in their original positions, as I witnessed their removal. It is to be regretted that the foundations, as first laid bare, were not left as found, for future examination, instead of being made by the man in charge—who is nothing of an archæologist—into grotto-work. The entrance to the tomb is through an outer chamber, and at right angles with this outer chamber; in the tomb chamber there is a loculus on one side, where a body could have been laid; also places at the head and foot where the angels could sit as recorded by the evangelists; there is also a small window in the face of the rock from the tomb itself, through which one could see into the tomb without entering in. There is no doubt that a rolling stone once covered the entrance, as the face of the cliff over the entrance has been prepared for such, and the trough in which the stone rolled is still intact.

Inside, on one of the rock walls of the tomb, two crosses were found painted, these having been placed there at some remote period; for we must remember the whole entrance to the tomb had been covered up for ages with many feet of débris and earth, and grown over with grass, and no such things as a tomb chamber was even suspected until after the identification of the adjoining hill as Cal-



VEILED WOMEN



THE "ONE EYE"



KISS OF THE BIBLE



CORN MEASURER



JEWS AT WAILING PLACE



WOMEN WAILING

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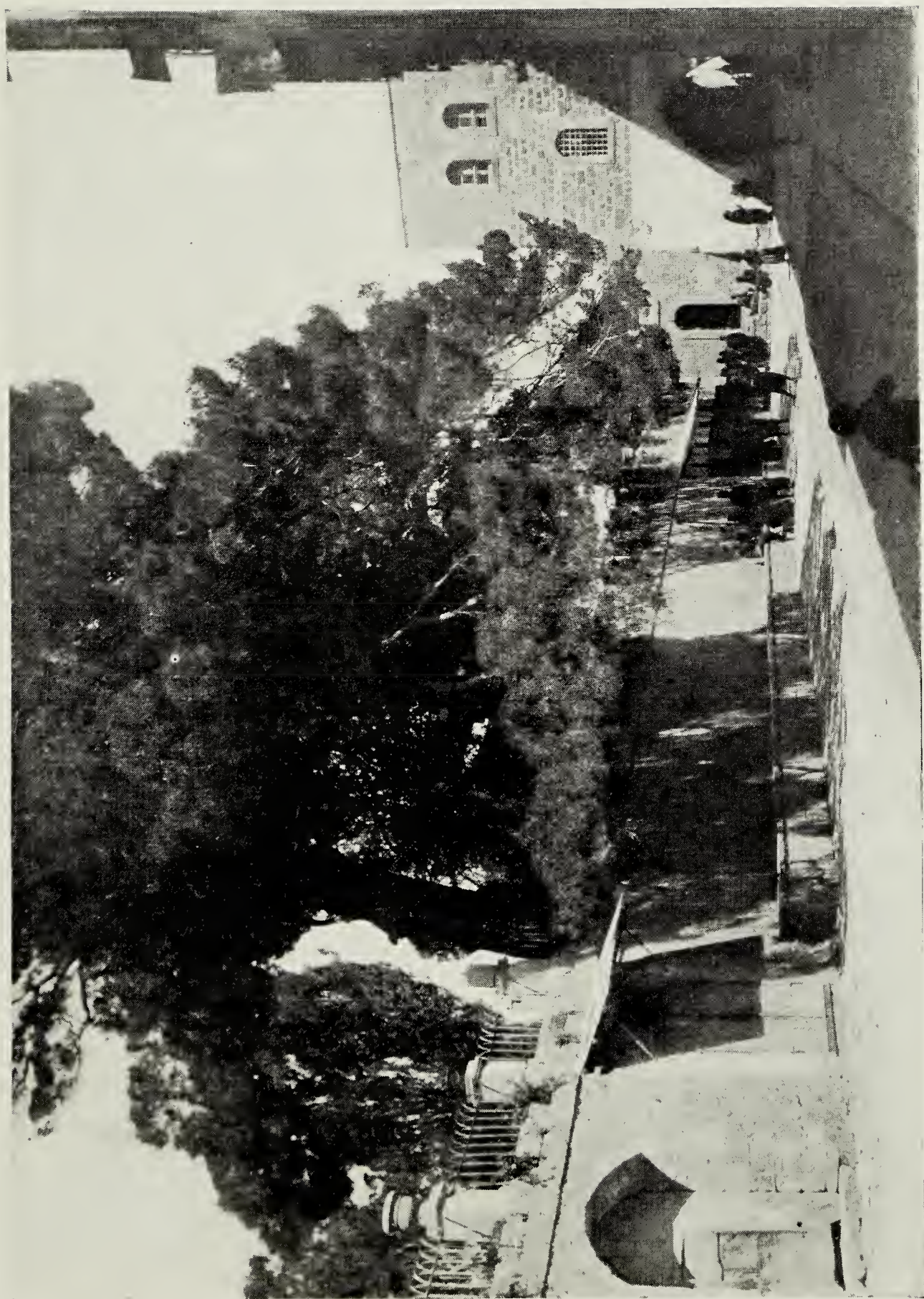
vary. The summit of the hill is now a Moslem cemetery, which is a fortunate circumstance, as it cannot be built upon. Until a few years ago it was open and unenclosed, and during the time parties of tourists were in Jerusalem the leaders of an independent Protestant mission were in the habit of inviting the tourists to attend an outdoor service there on Sunday afternoons, when the graves of the Moslems were trampled over in a shameful manner. And so the Moslems were obliged to build a wall around to protect their graves, and consequently tourists are not able to walk about it now, admission being denied. But before it was enclosed I secured several photographs of it, and the accompanying picture shows the rent rocks—immense boulders of rock, which could only have been shattered by some great convulsion of Nature. These rent rocks have since been quarried up and utilised in the construction of the wall.

I know that the hill and the adjacent tomb have been the subject of fierce controversy; of course, the sects that have interests in the Holy Sepulchre are hard opponents of the sites outside the walls, and this will be so as long as the Holy Sepulchre is such a prolific source of fees. I have been told that each pilgrim leaves, on an average, as his own contribution, together with the sums he has brought as proxy, no less than twenty pounds; and as there are thousands of these pilgrims coming every year, it will go hard with the clergy to give up the sites which are their source of supply. But there are many Protestants also who are in doubt about the new sites, as they are called. I observe that Condor, while fully agreeing as to the hill being Calvary, does not approve of this tomb, preferring one not far away; and McAlister says it is not a Jewish tomb. There are also other objectors, most of whom, I have observed, are actuated by some bias; and the value of the opinion of one writer, who is most bitter of all, may be gauged by the sneer about "the Protestant Calvary." We must remember that there are many kinds of tombs about Jerusalem, each kind characteristic of differing

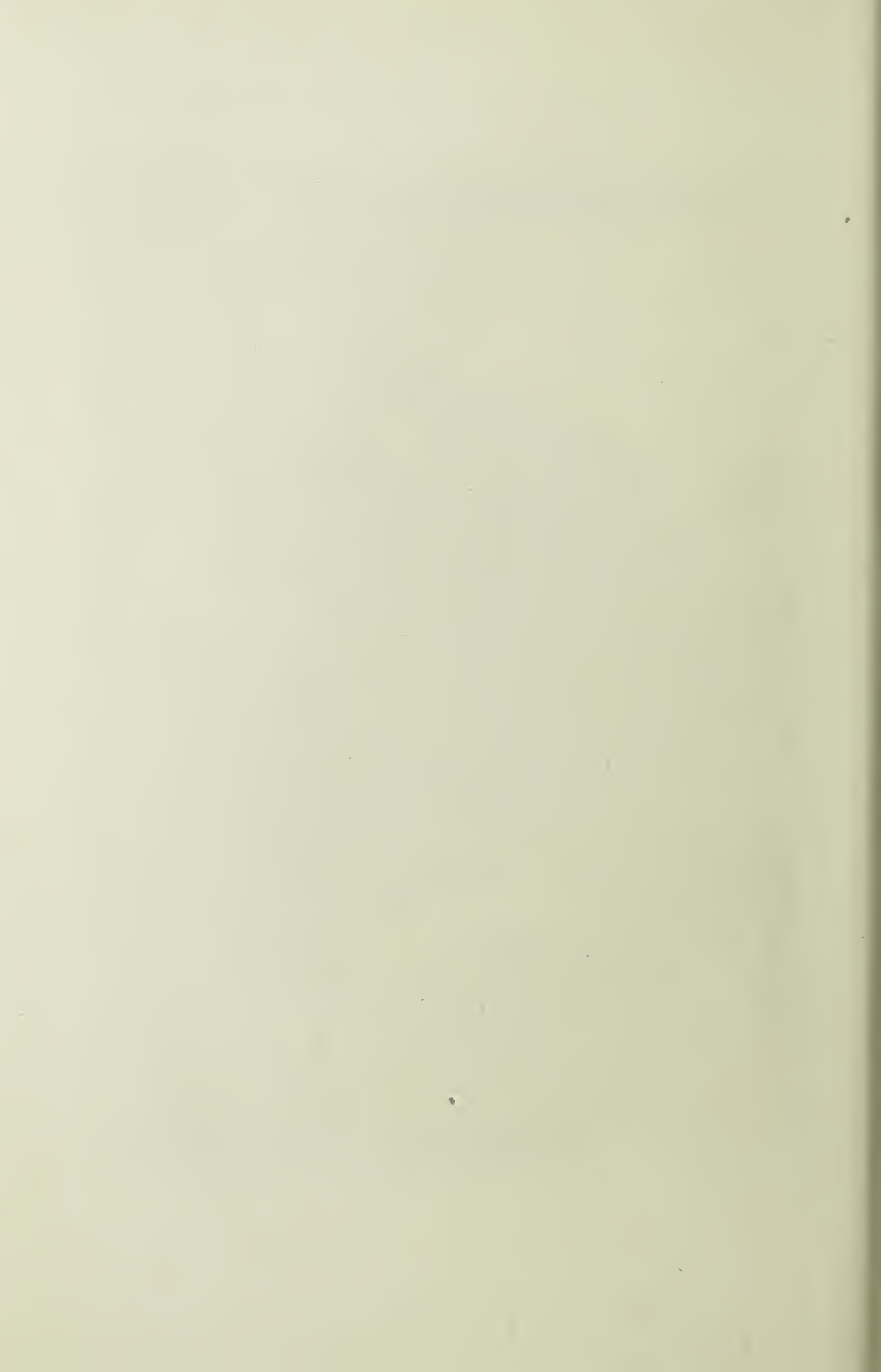
periods; and Laurence Oliphant, who had great experience in regard to Jewish tombs, says, concerning this one: "From the knowledge we have now acquired of rock-cut tombs in Palestine, we are able to judge from its appearance and construction its probable date; and these all go to prove that it belongs to the later Jewish period, or that which terminated with the destruction of Jerusalem." It is also the only kind of tomb that will admit of persons sitting at the head and feet of the loculus, an essential feature in determining the possibility of its being the place where the Lord lay; for we are expressly told by the evangelist that Mary "saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain."

But, after all, what matters the actual site? The knowledge of the actual site would not add one iota of importance to the glorious fact; the words and deeds of Christ's life and death are for the whole world, and not for one spot to make its own. The disciples and evangelists who recorded His doings thought more of the Master and His works than of the places where the deeds were done, and thus were careless of telling us the identical position of the way of sorrow, the place of a skull, or the empty tomb; and it is remarkable that the Apostle Paul, in that consummate argument for the Resurrection in 1 Cor. xv., makes no mention of the site, although he dwells on the glorious fact.

Leaving the garden tomb and returning to the road, we continue past the entrance to the grounds to the beautiful new Church of St. Stephen, just opposite to which we see some tents among the olive trees on the left. At first sight we take this to be a Bedouin encampment, and it has been so described by other writers. They are not Bedouins, however, but gipsies—gipsies pure and simple, with all the characteristics of gipsies: they speak the Romany dialect, and, like gipsies, are sadly addicted to plunder. It does not appear how they manage to get a living, as they do not seem to do anything in the daytime except beg; but every

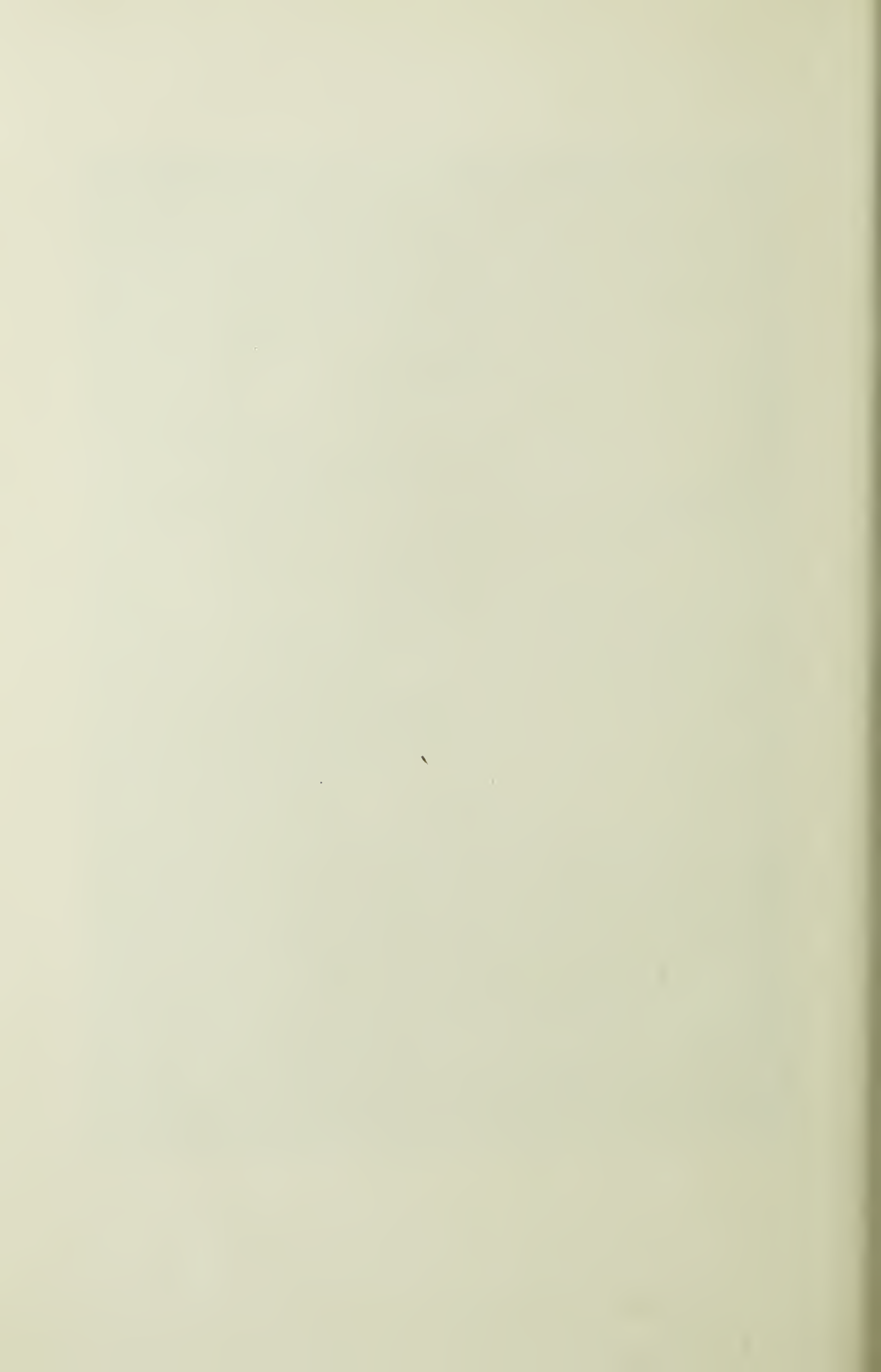


OLD TAMARISK TREES





THE JEWS' WAILING PLACE



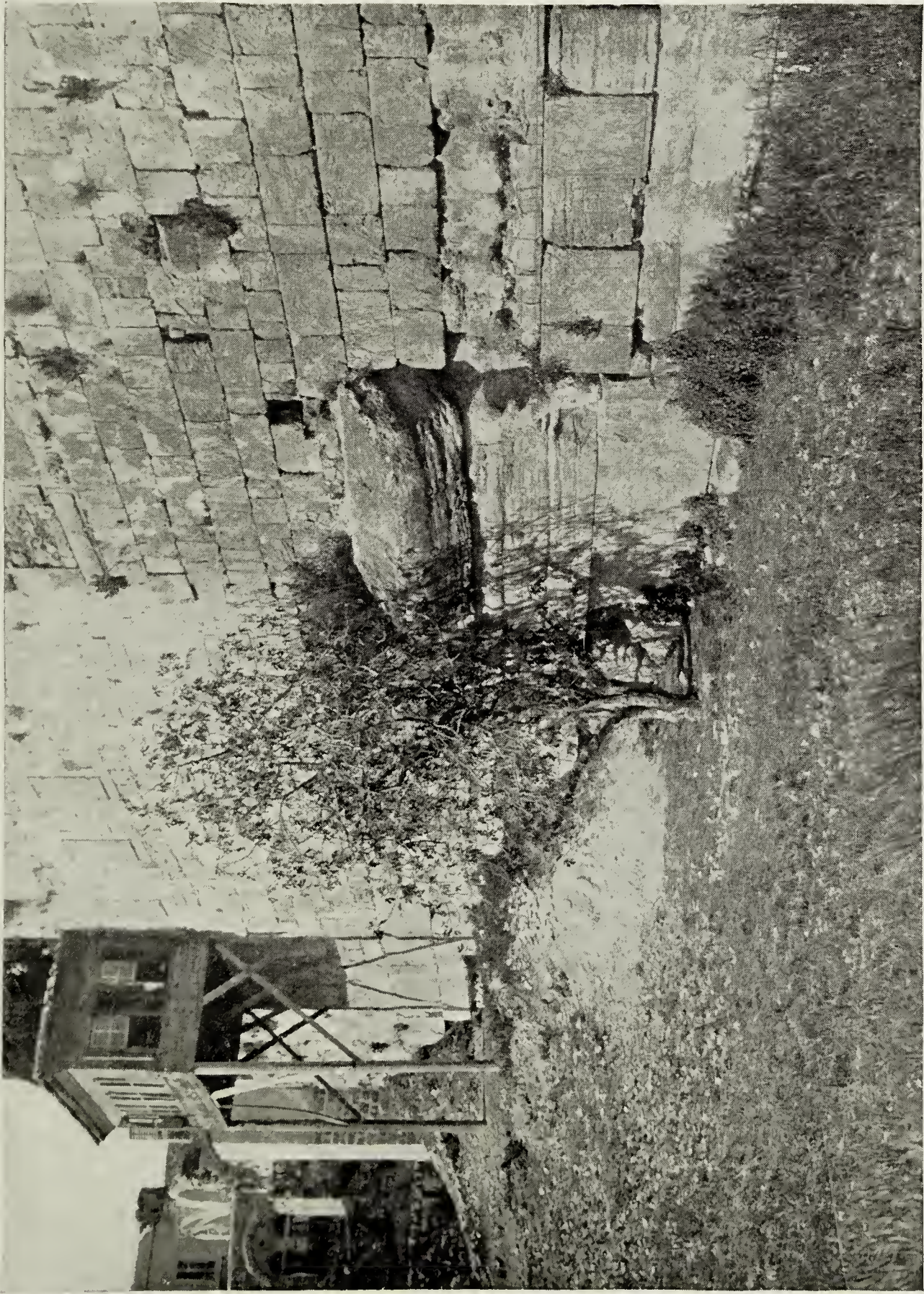
theft at night is credited to them by the Jerusalemites, and they are looked on as most undesirable neighbours. A curious tale is told concerning them, as not only illustrating their artful propensities in getting other people's property, but also as illustrating the superstitious element in the natives of Palestine. It is related that one day, as a native gentleman was riding his donkey, which was a very fine one, two of these gipsies saw him; when one remarked to the other: "That is a good donkey; we ought to get that donkey; he would sell for a good price." While they were discussing as to some practical method of securing the beast, they saw the man suddenly dismount at the door of a house, tie the donkey to the ring generally let in the wall for that purpose, and, having secured the animal there, he entered the dwelling. "Now is our chance," said one of the gipsies; "I will get down on my hands and knees, and do you take the saddle and bridle from the donkey, and put them on me; and then you be off with the donkey as fast as you can." When the gentleman returned to the door at the end of his visit, he was greatly astonished to find, instead of his donkey, a man in its place, wearing the donkey's saddle and bridle. "Why, how is this?" he asked. "I am very sorry, master," replied the man, "the more so as you have been a good master to me. But seven years ago I disobeyed my father, and for punishment I was turned into a donkey. The seven years has just expired, and I have just been liberated from the spell and have come to myself again." The gentleman, though astonished, did not deem the story an unlikely one; but he said: "At any rate I will have my bridle and saddle; they will do for another donkey when I can get one." On the next market day he went to the Sultan's pool, in the valley of Gihon, to try and purchase a new donkey, and, to his surprise, he saw being offered for sale the beast he had lost. He went up to the donkey, and, looking him in the face, said: "What, have you been disobeying your father again?" "Buy a good donkey, master?" said the man in charge. "Not that one, if I

know it," replied the gentleman, "for he may recover his original form again; I would not buy that donkey a second time."

The road leads past the new English Church of St. George, and the residence of Bishop Blyth, with the numerous school-houses and other buildings attached to the mission.

At the end of the church walls we see in the centre of the way where a cross-road joins a well, called the Well of the Dog, from a legend that a dog was drowned in the well; and, turning to the right where the cross-road joins, we see in the wall on the left a doorway giving entrance to an enclosure in which is situated the so-called Tombs of the Kings. Entering and walking down the wide steps, we see on our right channels cut in the rock to convey the water of the rainfall into a rock-cut cistern at the bottom. Now, turning through the opening on our left, we find ourselves in an open quadrangle, on one side of which is the immense portico leading to the tombs. From the elaborate nature of this portico, it was formerly conjectured that it must be none other than the tombs of the kings of Israel, and so it came to be known as the Tombs of the Kings, a name it has retained ever since.

There are many tombs in this vicinity on the north side of Jerusalem, none of which can be identified as belonging to any one in particular save this, which, since the excavations of Pocock, and especially M. de Sauley, has been shown to confirm the account of Josephus that Helena, queen of Adiabene, was, with her numerous family, buried here. The Jews held this queen in the highest esteem, for not only did she send from Antioch shiploads of grain for the starving Jews during a time of famine, but herself became a convert to Judaism, and came to reside at Jerusalem. She subsequently returned to her home, where she died; but her body was brought to Jerusalem to be buried in the tomb constructed by Izates, her son. Izates, it is said, had twenty-four sons, and this probably accounts for the extent of the tomb. The tomb was closed by a rolling



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ROBINSON'S ARCH



MOSQUE OF OMAR, OR DOME OF THE ROCK

stone, which still remains rolled away a little back from the entrance, and the small opening leads into a large chamber, from which radiate the numerous *kokim*, or tunnel graves. The tomb chamber of the queen herself is at a lower level, and, the entrance having been carefully closed with masonry, it was with difficulty discovered. In this lower chamber a richly decorated sarcophagus was found, which has been sent to Paris, and is deposited in the Louvre Museum. In removing the sarcophagus from the tomb chamber, it was found that it was larger than the opening to the chamber, and the opening had to be enlarged to allow of its being brought out; hence they were puzzled as to how it was got in, the only explanation of the problem being that it must have been hewn out in the chamber itself. The various other chambers were also carefully fitted with stone doors. The whole place now belongs to the French, to whom it was conceded by firman, and who had it cleared out.

We now leave the Tombs of the Kings, and, taking the cross-road opposite the entrance to the English church, we find the road soon takes a rise over a mound, and here we see a rough bridle-path branching off to the right towards the north.

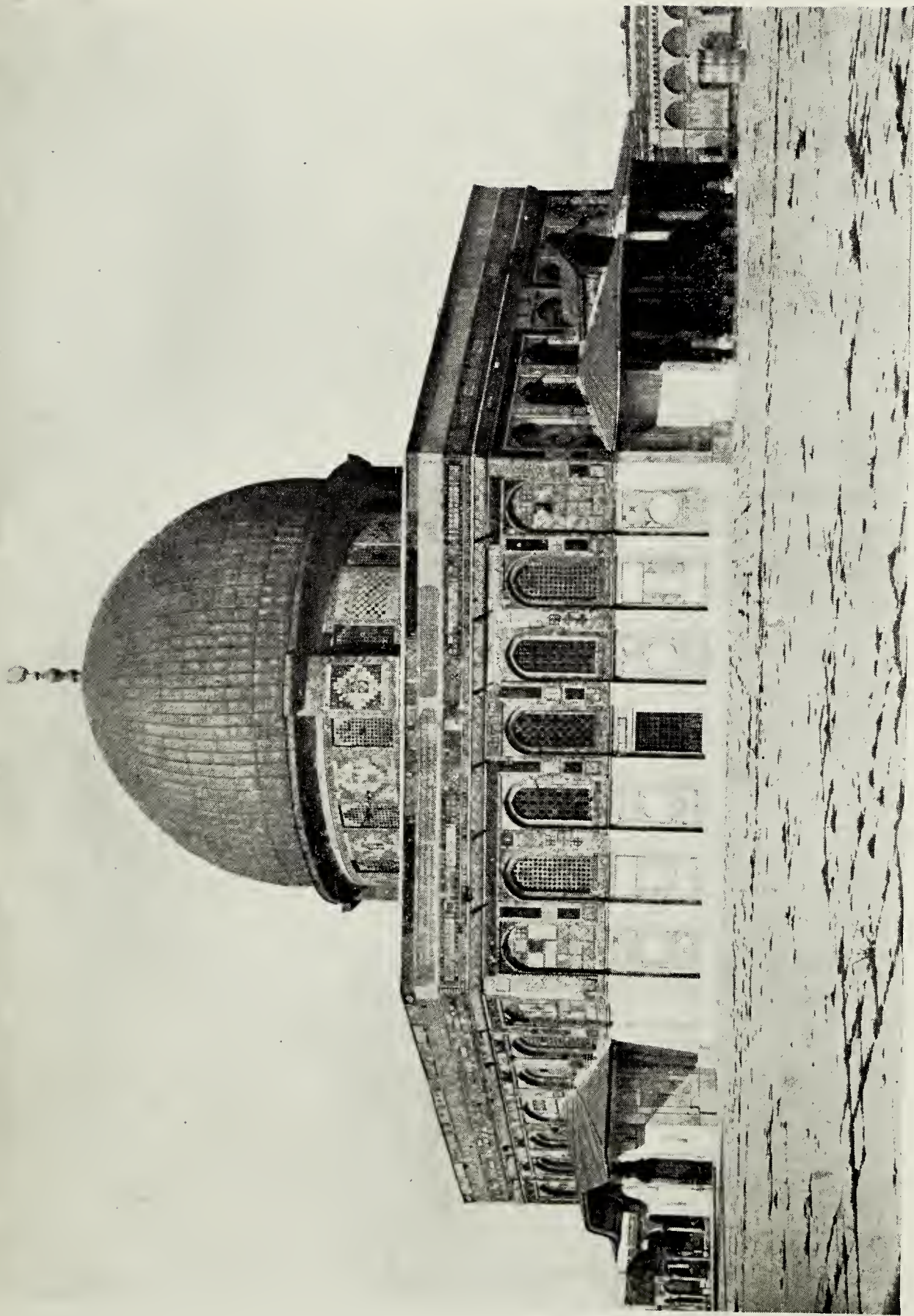
We take this path, and observe that building operations are being rapidly pushed forward in this district, and new blocks of tenements are springing up all around; these are being built by Jew speculators for the accommodation of the large number of returning Jews. On leaving the road for the path, there was in this place, until recent years, a large mound of ashes nearly forty feet high, and the rise in the road is occasioned by its being made over the side of this heap.

When the Jews began to build here, they found in these ashes a source of supply for making their mortar, and in sifting the ashes they found a large quantity of charred bones permeating through the whole heap. From this it was conjectured that this valley formed the place, or plot of waste ground, where the ashes from the ancient sacrifices

of the temple were deposited, and consequently that this may have been the scene of Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones. Some have conjectured, too, but without any reason except a pretty fancy, that this heap was where the Crucifixion took place, and that the place of the bones and ashes of the Mosaic sacrifices was also the scene of the Sacrifice offered up once for all.

The whole of this district is now, for the first time, being built upon; whole streets of houses are being erected here as fast as possible; and it is interesting to walk along these streets at sundown on Friday evenings, and see through the windows, as we pass by, candles being lighted up, one for each member of the family; and then the father, taking the Scriptures, with his whole household sitting around him, becomes the family priest. The fact of this whole district being, for the first time in history, purchased and built upon brings to mind the prophecy of Jer. xxxi. 38: "The days shall come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built . . . from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes and all the fields, unto the brook Kidron." High up above the Jewish colony we see in a walled-in enclosure a pretty residence. This was the first house built outside the walls of Jerusalem, and was the residence of the English consul, Mr. Finn. It still belongs to his widow, and the grounds, still clustering with vines, are called—for what reason I know not—Abraham's vineyard. One thing is certain: it is an ancient vineyard, and near by the house a number of old winepresses hewn out of the rocks are known as David's winepresses. Beneath the basement of the house is a Roman columbarium. Mrs. Finn is having a number of huge tanks constructed in the grounds, to supply the poor Jews in the district with rain-water, taking as her motto for her benevolent object the words, "I will give them water."

The winepresses and the buildings around call to mind another prophecy being fulfilled in this district—Zech. xiv. 10, where it states: Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited,



MOSQUE OF OMAR

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INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF OMAR

“from Benjamin’s gate unto the first gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king’s winepresses.”

The path now leads northwards, through fields and olive orchards, and on either side tombs may be seen, for this whole district seems honeycombed with tombs; there are numerous rock-cave tombs on the right, and other entrances to tombs can be seen jutting out of the soil of the fields on the left.

We continue along the straight path for some distance, and just after passing more tombs on the right near the path we turn a corner by a knoll of rising ground to the right, and soon see the ornamental gabled portal of the Tombs of the Judges.

The opening under the portal leads to the tomb chamber, which, it is seen, was once capable of being closed up. This first tomb chamber leads to several others, at various levels, in all of which a number of lateral shaft-tombs are found. Nothing whatever has been discovered to prove for whom this series of tombs were constructed, or that they are the resting-places of the judges of Israel, and the tradition is modern.

We may now conveniently visit Mizpeh and Emmaus; but for this journey donkeys should be taken, as it is a rather long distance to walk. We should also, when going to these out-of-the-way places, take a native with us who is acquainted with the route, for many of these pathways in Palestine are so overgrown that they are difficult to trace. And we cannot ask a native whom we may happen to meet here—like we can at home, where the roads are well defined, and one can tell us to take the first to the right, and the second to the left, etc.—as in many of the country districts here there are really no visible paths, and the natives take the directions by landmarks. And even in the towns the paths are often so narrow, crooked, and confusing that one could not well direct you; and so, if you ask a native the way anywhere, he will at once say, without any hesitation: *Ana-el-Tarik* (“I am the way”); by which he means: “I will show you the way; I will take you there.” I heard

this expression used many times in going up through the country, and once, when in Damascus, I had been strolling about for some time, much interested in what I saw, and, on looking at my watch, I found it was almost dinner-time. Now I do not like to lose my dinner or to be late at table, but I feared that on this occasion I should be so, as I thought I must be a long way from my hotel.

Still, thinking that there might be a nearer way than that by which I had come, and seeing a young man coming, I asked him the nearest way to the hotel. "I am the way," he replied, and, turning round, he started down a dark, narrow passage; it was full of zigzags, and, for aught I knew, he might be leading me into a trap. But I followed his leading, trusting fully to him, and soon I found myself where I wanted to be.

Now we remember that the Saviour Himself once used that same expression, and I want to show that there is a deeper and sweeter meaning than we have ever before realised. He had been telling His disciples that He was about to leave them; that He was going to prepare for them places in the many mansions, and that where He should be it was His will they should be also. Philip and Thomas were troubled about the way. "Lord," said Philip, "how shall we know the way?" Jesus said, "I am the way"; that is, "I will show you the way, only follow Me; only trust Me, and I will take you safely there."

"Trusting Jesus every day ;
Trusting through a stormy way ;
Trusting though your faith be small ;
Trusting Jesus, that is all.'

We see before us, on our left, the lofty hill on which the village now called Neby Samwil is situated; we turn sharp to the left, and descend the valley; soon after crossing the bed of which, and beginning to ascend on the opposite side, we observe the remains of an old Roman road—probably the work of Hadrian; and before long we come to the village on the stately hill, which is the loftiest in



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INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF EL-AKSA



MOSQUE OF EL-AKSA



OUTDOOR SARACENIC PULPIT

[To face p. 96

central Palestine, and from which a fine panoramic view can be had. The village stands in a splendid position, and the view from it embraces many places made famous in old Bible story. Near by is Gibeon and Rama; and on that waste stretch of land between the two places Joshua defeated the allied kings, and secured possession of this part of the country.

The village is on or near the site of Mizpeh, where the prophet Samuel judged Israel for forty years. It was on this hill the people of Israel assembled and made choice of their first king, and here was first heard the cry: "God save the king!" It was here Jeremiah lived when he escaped from being carried off to Babylon, after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

And here the crusaders, with Richard the Lion-hearted, caught their first sight of the Holy City they had come to rescue from the infidels, and the sight of which so filled their hearts with joy that they named the hill Mount Joy. Soon after leaving Mizpeh we find in a cave an overturned oil-press, a relic of the more prosperous times when these hill-sides, now lying waste, were covered with olive trees and vineyards. About half-an-hour's ride brings us in sight of the village of Kubebeh, which has been identified as Emmaus.

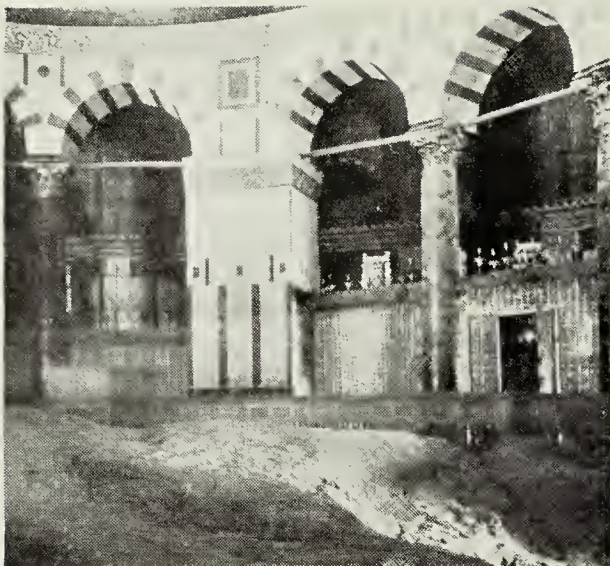
Other sites claim to be Emmaus also, notably Kolonia and Nicopolis; but measurements of distance from Jerusalem, as well as early tradition, favour the assumption that Kubebeh has the better claim.

The situation of the village is beautiful, and the district contains many ruins. The church here, of the Latins, is said to cover the site of the house of Cleopas, where the Saviour was constrained to "abide, for the day is far spent," and where He broke bread with the disciples on that first Easter evening, and the disciples experienced that glow of spirit which is ever born of living communion with the Master.

In the adjoining convent buildings accommodation is provided for visitors who may wish to stay the night, or a

midday meal is offered with a welcome to such as are only staying for a short time to look round the place.

The return journey to Jerusalem may be profitably varied by turning down the valley to the right after ascending the hill again from Kubebeh, and following that valley down to Kolonieh, on the Jaffa road, and thence up to Jerusalem.



THE SACRED ROCK



SOLOMON'S STABLES



ST. STEPHEN'S GATE



FRAGMENT OF OLD WALL



JEWS' BURYING-GROUND



GOLDEN GATE, INTERIOR VIEW

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CHAPTER VII

A RIDE TO SOLOMON'S POOLS AND HEBRON

A VERY interesting day's excursion is to Hebron (via Bethlehem) and Solomon's pools, which, if time is urgent, can be made in one day, as a good carriage-road has been made all the way to Hebron. But where time is not pressing, it would be well to make a separate journey to Bethlehem to give more time in which to examine the place.

The road leads by the Birket-es-Sultan, sometimes called the lower pool of Gihon, and leaving the Jewish almshouses, the railway station, and the pleasant-looking houses of the German colony on the right, we emerge on part of the plain of Rephaim.

About half-a-mile from Jerusalem we see by the side of the road, on the left, a well; this is known as the Well of the Magi, or star, because of the tradition that the wise men from the East saw reflected in the water of this well the star which guided them to Bethlehem, where they found the Child Jesus; of course the legend is a myth.

On the top of the hill before us on the left stands the Greek convent buildings of Mar Elias, which are named after the bishop by whom they were built; but the place is frequently associated with the prophet Elijah, about whom a legend has been invented, that he once slept here, and the impress of his body where he lay is shown in the rock by the roadside. Beyond the convent we skirt a valley on the left, across which we get a beautiful view toward Bethlehem, the Dead Sea, the Frank Mountain, and the mountains of Moab. The handsome building on

the right is a hospital erected over the spot where Rachel gave birth to Benjamin—"the son of my sorrow"—and died; it is a most fitting memorial, surely, of the sad event.

Just beyond is the tomb of Rachel, where Jacob buried the beloved wife for whom he had gladly given fourteen years of servitude, and to whose death he so pathetically referred on his death-bed. The site agrees with the Scripture narrative that she was buried by the roadside, "a little way from Bethlehem," and the place has been venerated as Rachel's resting-place from time immemorial by Jews, Christians, and Mahomedans. The present building with the dome was repaired and restored by Sir Moses Montefiore in 1832, but there seems to have been always some memorial marking the spot, and it is referred to by the Bordeaux Pilgrim as early as A.D. 333. Poor Rachel's race has undergone many vicissitudes since she was laid here by her broken-hearted husband; but thirty centuries of sorrow and suffering have not been able to sweep away the memory of the site from Rachel's posterity. The village we see away over to the right is Beit Jala, a Christian village, smaller than Bethlehem.

Just after passing Rachel's tomb the road divides, that on the left leading to Bethlehem, and the one on the right to Hebron. It is along this we continue our drive, and in half-an-hour we reach the khan and immense reservoirs of Solomon's pools.

These reservoirs are three in number, and are constructed one below the other across the bed of the valley by building dams across at the lower end of each. The pools are unquestionably of great antiquity, though whether they were constructed by King Solomon in the first instance, and are those referred to by him in Eccles. ii. 5, 6: "I made me gardens and orchards, and I . . . made me pools of water, to water therewith," there is no evidence to show with certainty; they may have been those referred to; and, as there are gardens of extraordinary fertility just below, which are watered by the overflow from the pools, no spot

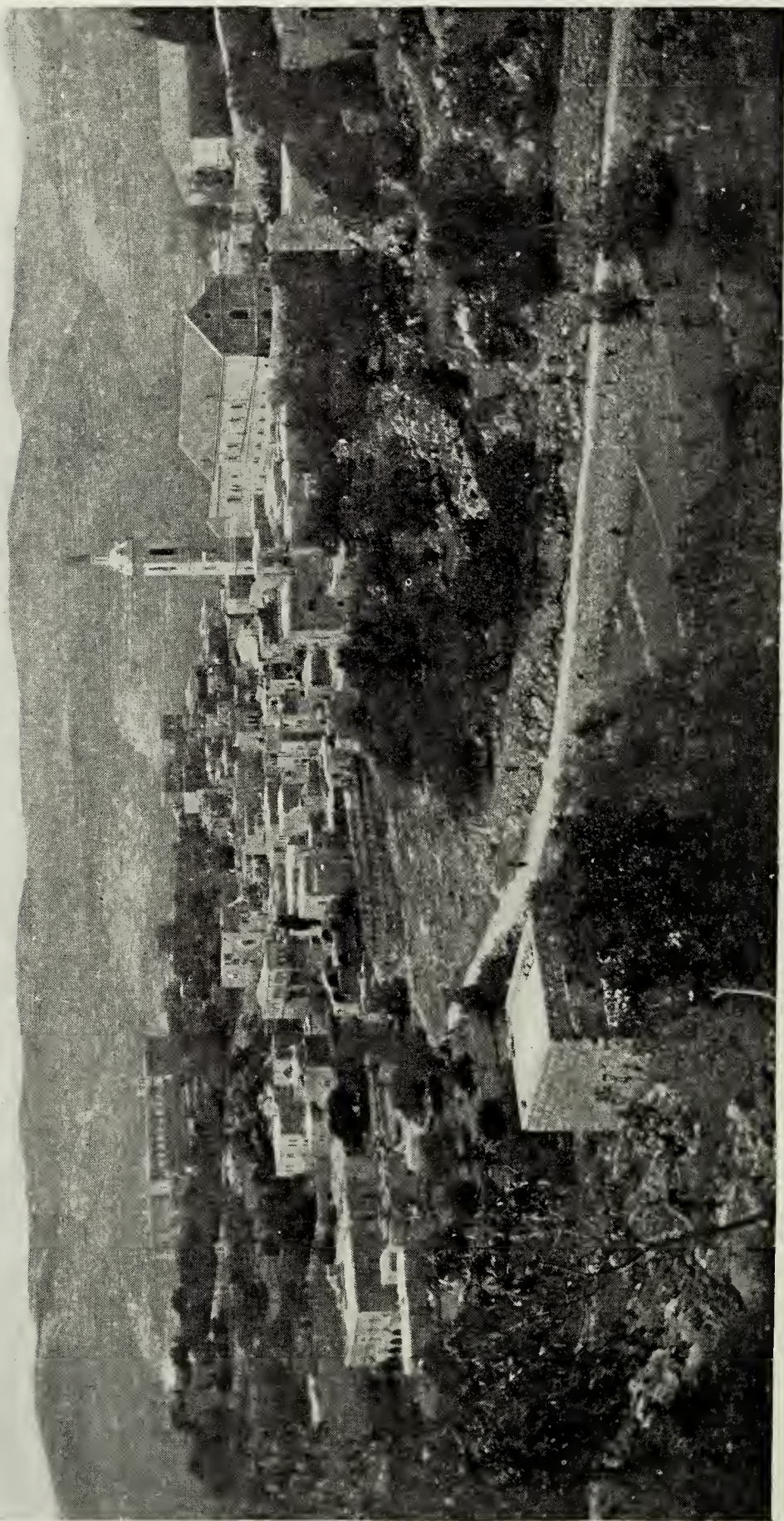


WOMEN MOURNING AT THE GRAVE



THE GOLDEN GATE

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AIN KARIM, THE OLD VILLAGE

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is more likely to meet the circumstances of the case. But the work of the pools as we see them to-day—the walls, the embankment, and the buttresses—are unquestionably Roman work, as are also the stone pipes to which reference has already been made; and Josephus has left on record that Pontius Pilate began to construct a conduit, intending to bring water to Jerusalem. The lowest pool is the finest of the three, it is about one hundred and forty-nine yards long, by about sixty feet wide, and forty-eight feet deep. The pools are supplied by several springs of water, all near the pools, one of which, between the pools and the road, concealed in a vaulted chamber, is supposed by many to be identical with the sealed spring mentioned in Solomon's Song iv. 12. The castle-like building near the upper pool was apparently built for the protection of the pools against the Bedouins, and also served as a khan. It is now falling into a dilapidated condition, and unless some steps are taken to preserve it, the walls will soon tumble to pieces.

In the valley below are a few ruins, probably on the old site of Etam, and a little farther on is the modern village of Urtas, which is chiefly inhabited by Moslems, and a small European colony.

It is here that the agriculturist Baldensperger cultivates vegetables, fruit, etc., for the Jerusalem market. The road now turns to the right and gradually ascends, the land on either side in spring-time being bespangled with flowers and wild herbs, which exhale a grateful perfume. We cross and recross in places the old rough path, which, until twenty years ago, was the old highway to Hebron; a rough and rugged way it was, of course totally unsuited for carriages, and difficult for horses, and yet some of the natives still prefer the old road; and camels with their loads of merchandise may be met slowly threading their way among the boulders of stones, with their picturesque riders seated on their necks—a picture, surely, of those old merchantmen who carried Joseph along this very road to Egypt after his brethren had sold him. Some-

times a dead camel lies near by the road, literally worked to death, for the poor things will trudge on till the very last, and when they fall they do so never to rise again. Very often, indeed, in the East we pass by the carcasses of camels that

“By the roadside fell, weary with the march of life.”

About half-way to Hebron the carriages halt for half-an-hour at a rude wayside native inn to rest and bait the horses, and the traveller is also glad to take the opportunity afforded of eating a sandwich brought with him from Jerusalem, with perhaps a cup of coffee obtainable at the inn. This inn was first of all a few shambles piled up together; afterwards some stones were collected from the ground near by, and laid dry to form walls; and no doubt this is an embryo hotel, for year by year these rude roadside inns are improved, until bedrooms and a dining-room are added, plain enough and destitute of furniture, but ever welcome to a weary traveller, who, especially in bad weather, is glad of “any port in a storm.”

By and by we see a large pond on the right, and the ruins of a village and remains of a garden. Then we soon notice on the left a ruined church, and close by, issuing from the rocks, a copious spring of water. The ruins show that it must at some time have been a place of importance. The place was considered in ancient times as the spot where the Ethiopian eunuch said to Philip: “See, here is water, what doth hinder me from being baptized?” (Acts viii. 36-39.)

A number of Old Testament sites are now passed by, their remains testifying to their antiquity; some wine-presses are also passed, for we are nearing the vale of Eshcol, where the grape-vines still flourish, and also apricots and figs. The building we see high up on the right is the Greek hospice, near Abraham's Oak, which we shall visit in returning. Next we see a modern-looking erection among the fields on the right, almost the first building we come to in the environs of Hebron: this is



“ MRS. GORDON’S ” FOLLY



CONVENT OF THE CROSS

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an English hospital, looked after by Dr. Patterson and his helpers. Next we pass a house with a balcony on the left: this is the doctor's residence, where his good wife often welcomes visitors to a cheering cup of tea; soon after passing this house we enter the town, and our horses are driven into a dirty yard, with a few filthy rooms round, kept by a Jew, and dignified by the name of an hotel. But it is a shelter from the interference of the inhabitants, who, consisting mainly of Moslems of the more fanatical type, are sometimes rather pestering and insulting.

But an old Moslem, with the prospect of "backsheesh," takes us under the shelter of his wing, and safely leads us round. We go first past the tombs on the right up the hill-side to get a good general impression of the old city, and under the spreading branches of an olive tree we sit awhile and muse.

This is one of the oldest cities in the world, and it is yet flourishing.

Many of the Biblical sites of Palestine are very problematical; but here, at any rate, we are on safe ground. It must have been somewhere near here that Abraham—the friend of God—pitched his tents under the oaks of Mamre, and entertained angels unawares. Here his wife Sarah died, and over there under the mosque is the double cave of Machpelah, which he purchased from Ephron the Hittite as a family burying-place, and here he buried Sarah, and here also Isaac his son and Rebecca and Leah found a resting-place. To this place the mind of old Jacob turned as, when he lay dying in far-away Egypt, he charged his son Joseph to carry up his bones to the resting-place of his fathers, and if the tomb could be opened and searched there is no doubt but that his embalmed body would still be found lying there, even as those Pharaohs, one of whom he knew and with whom he talked, have been found and may be seen in the museum at Cairo. Our old guide tells us that Joseph is buried there too, and he shows us, near the doorway inside, his cenotaph; but we know that Joseph was, by his express desire, buried at

Shechem. No doubt some Moslem legend has been invented as to this belief; but we think it exceedingly doubtful if ever his remains have been removed from the parcel of ground that his father gave him at Shechem, near Jacob's well.

This was David's first royal city, and over there near the mosque is the pool over which he hung the hands and feet of the murderers of Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, who for their crime were slain by his order. But what is that commotion on the opposite hill-side? People are rushing forth from a large house, shrieking and making the valley hideous by their mournful screams. "Ah!" soliloquises our guide, "then it is all over, our Sheik is dead at last."

In the afternoon before we left the place we saw his funeral, for no sooner is a person dead in that country than preparations are made for the burial, which takes place the same day. Practically all the population of Hebron assembled at that funeral, all howling and wailing, for their Sheik was dead, and we saw the successor of old Sheik Abraham borne to his last resting-place.

Our guide piloted us through the streets to see the shops, and the glass trinkets being made in primitive furnaces.

Then we were taken to the entrance of the mosque, and up the steps to a point beyond which it would be unsafe to tread, for jealous Moslems were watching. We were allowed to put our arm through a hole in the wall, just to touch a portion of one of the cenotaphs, and then we walked round the mosque, the most sacred now of all the Moslem shrines, save Mecca, and in which no Christian is allowed to enter without a special firman from the Sultan himself.

It was by such a special order that our late king, when he was Prince of Wales, entered in 1862, and since that time a few other royalties to whom the Sultan wished to show favour. But the special exclusiveness of the place has been thereby broken down, already two Christian

photographers have photographed in the interior, and so, ere long, as everywhere else, we may expect that "back-sheesh" will be the open sesame. But the interior is, after all, scarcely worth much trouble to see: there are gaudy cenotaphs to Abraham, Isaac, Leah, Jacob and Joseph; but their real tombs are below the floor in the underground caves, and cannot be entered, even by those who have permission to enter the mosque.

It is well they cannot, for if the mummied remains of poor Jacob could be found they would want him for some museum, like the Pharaohs, whose features are open to the vulgar gaze of trippers in the museum at Cairo; so Jacob would be subjected to the vulgar gaze, and rude remarks would be made as to his appearance; and like them he would be treated as an antique curiosity. We noticed on the ground above the mosque large numbers of goatskins being tanned for the purpose of being made into the skin wine-bottles so largely used for storing wine and carrying water. The courtyard of the house at which we put up is overlooked by a three-storeyed building, nearly all the windows of which are smashed. It brought to our mind a reminiscence of our first visit to Hebron twenty-three years ago, before the road was completed, when we essayed to stay a night there. We were accommodated in the upper room of that house, and the broken windows are the reward of the populace to the host for giving us hospitality, and they appear never to have been replaced.

We arrange for our carriages to meet us on the road a mile away, after we have visited the oak at Mamre, half-an-hour's walk away. One fine, but decaying old oak, is pointed out here as the very one under which the patriarch was visited by the angels, and hence it is called Abraham's Oak. A number of other young oaks abound near by, and, no doubt, when this old oak dies another will be selected from these to be the "Abraham's Oak," and succeeding generations who visit the place will be told that is the oak under which Abraham pitched his tent. But what matters?—the hill-sides are unchanged, the vine-

yards still flourish luxuriantly, and the same sky is above which at night-time is

“Studded with stars unutterably bright,
Through which the moon’s unclouded grandeur rolls ;
Seems like a canopy which love has spread,
To curtain her sleeping world.”

But we must not prolong our stay, or darkness will overtake us ere we arrive back at Jerusalem ; and as our driver has brought no lamps we should in that case be placed in a rather undesirable predicament, and perhaps be fined for driving without lamps when it was past lighting-up time. So we hurry back, and find our ever-welcome dinner ready.



ENTRANCE TO THE "GARDEN TOMB"



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VALLEY OF ASHES AND NEW JEWISH HOUSES

CHAPTER VIII

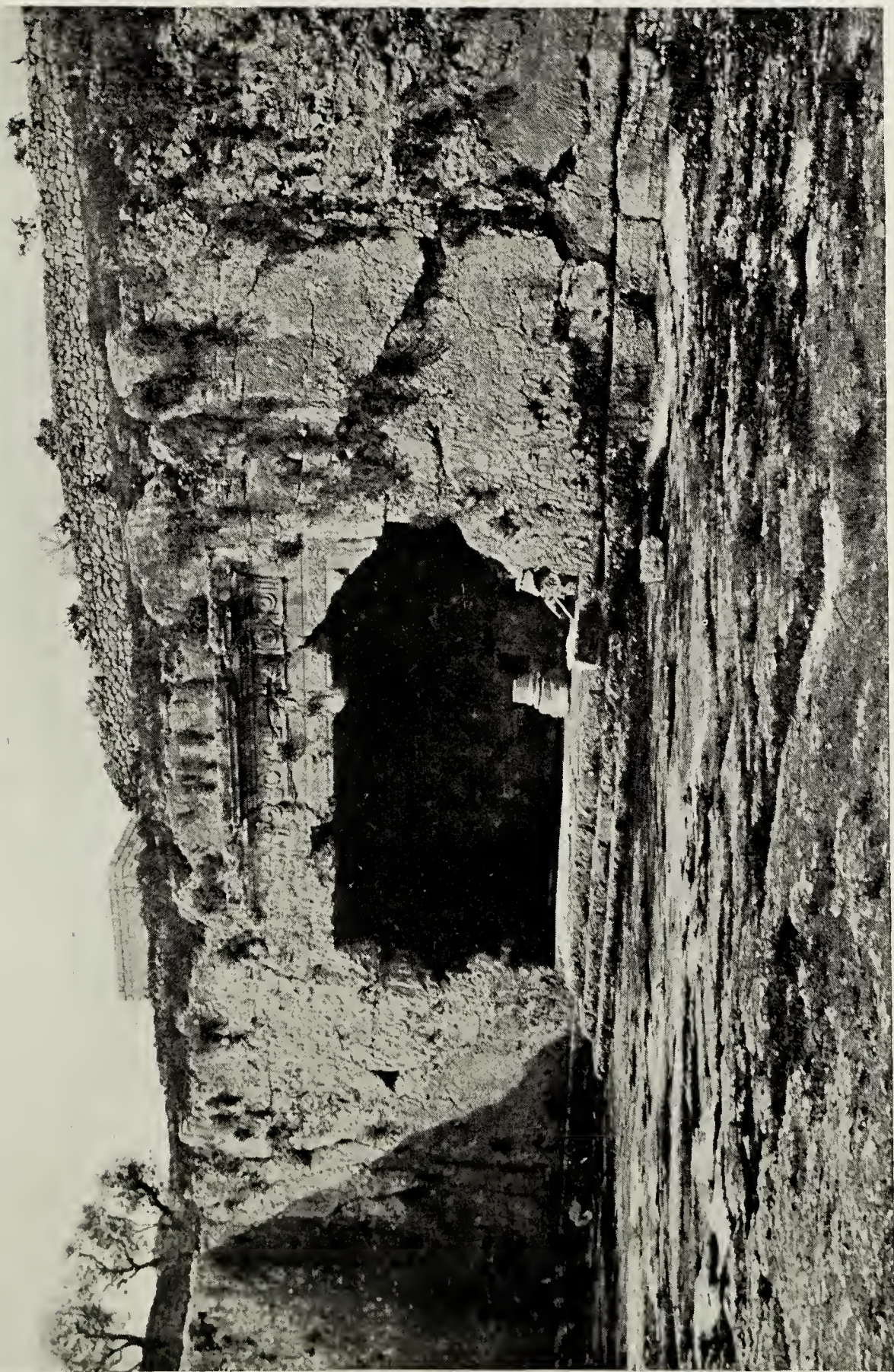
THE JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM, DEAD SEA AND JERICHO

THE road to Bethlehem is the same, as far as Rachel's tomb, as that we took to Hebron; here, however, the Bethlehem road diverges to the left, and, passing some extensive stone quarries, we enter the town through very narrow streets. When Rolla Floyd first drove to Bethlehem with the Austrian emperor the road was unfinished, and it was an exciting experience—probably the roughest ride that monarch had ever undertaken; but carriages are now running every day to Bethlehem, indeed there is a service of "conveyances," into which drivers crowd as many people as they possibly can; half-a-franc the natives pay for the journey—but they sometimes have to sit in each other's lap. But a franc will secure a seat, even to the turning of a half-franc fare out of one, if no other is to be had. But a franc is cheap enough, in all conscience, when it is remembered that Bethlehem is five miles away; and the driver will wait for you for hours on the chance of securing you for the returning journey at the same price. As we approach Bethlehem, we see it is beautifully situated on a terraced hill-side, and the terraces are well cultivated, and abound in olive and fig trees and vineyards. The houses are built of stone, and the place has an altogether better appearance than many of the towns of Palestine.

Though mentioned by Jacob, Bethlehem remained for many years small and unimportant, as its name does not appear in the list of villages assigned by Joshua to Judah; nor is it mentioned again till the seventh chapter of Judges, where it is stated that the young Levite who subsequently became the first idolatrous priest in Micah's house of gods was of Bethlehem-Judah. It was not until the time of Boaz

and Ruth that anything pleasant is recorded in the history of Bethlehem, but after that it rose to great celebrity as the birthplace of David, and finally it was rendered still more illustrious by the advent there of David's greater Son and Lord. The main street is occupied by houses, the bottom rooms of which, opening on the street, are used as workshops; for the principal industry of the place is the manufacture of mementoes in demand by tourists and pilgrims. Souvenirs in mother-of-pearl, asphalt cups and bowls from the Dead Sea, olive-wood crosses and rosaries—these, with the ever-ubiquitous postcards, are on sale everywhere here and in the branch shops at Jerusalem, and no doubt add very considerably to the revenue of the place. But the principal feature of interest in Bethlehem to every traveller is the church and convent of the Nativity, said to have been built exactly over the stable, or cave which served as such, where the Saviour of mankind was born. The entrance to the church from the square in front is anything but pleasing; the building appears from here to have been pieced together pell-mell, anyhow. We enter by a low doorway, and find ourselves in the nave of the church, which, though bare in the extreme, has the charm of antiquity about it; and its very simplicity adds to its grandeur.

The nave of the church belongs to all the sects of Christendom in common, which no doubt accounts for its lack of ornamentation, which in this case, however, is rather an advantage than otherwise, and adds to its venerable appearance. The red limestone columns on either side are very ancient, and, indeed, some of them are said to have been brought from the ruins of the temple at Jerusalem. The pointed roof is of open woodwork, made first of all of cedarwood from the Lebanon; subsequently it was repaired of English oak, sent for the purpose by Edward IV; and it was again restored in the seventeenth century. On the walls can be traced some mosaics, placed there in the twelfth century by Manuel Comnenus, the emperor of Constantinople, and representing Joseph's



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TOMB OF THE KINGS

ancestors, some of the more important councils, and some fantastic foliage, the drawing of which is very primitive. A screen has been built to divide off the chancel from the nave, which somewhat spoils the effect of the church; and behind this the Greeks hold their services, appropriating to themselves the whole of this part of the building except a small altar which belongs to the Armenians. This church is the oldest in the Holy Land, if not in the world, having been built, some believe, by the Empress Helena, and enlarged and beautified by Constantine, whilst others think it was built entirely by Constantine in honour of his mother's memory. It was in this church that Baldwin, the first crusading king of Jerusalem, was crowned with great pomp on Christmas Day 1101.

The Roman Catholics have built, or, as they say, rebuilt, the new Church of St. Catherine, adjoining the old building, mainly at the expense of the emperor of Austria, in 1861. The Latins were excluded from the place altogether from 1672 till 1852, when they were again admitted to their share of it by the intervention of Napoleon III.

The entrance to the cave of the Nativity is through the chancel, a flight of thirteen steps leading to the chapel containing the shrine. This is marked by a silver star let into the pavement, on which is engraved the inscription in Latin: *Hic de Virgine Marie Jesus Christus natus est* ("Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary"). Fifteen lamps, supplied by various nations and sects, shed a softened light on the recess containing the altar above the star, and these are always kept burning. Just opposite the cave, or shrine, of the Nativity is shown the chapel of the manger—an artificial manger in marble now substituting the wooden manger, which was removed, and is now one of the treasured relics in the Church of St. Marie Maggiore at Rome. The entire cave is rock-hewn, and, although most of the walls are covered with hangings or cased with marble, the native rock can be seen in places. There seems little reason to doubt that the cave is the veritable scene of the Nativity. Justin, one of the earliest of the Church

Fathers, who was born in 103 and martyred in 167, speaks of the cave at Bethlehem where Christ was born. Jerome, another of the early Church Fathers, who came and lived in an adjoining cave in the fourth century, and here translated the Scriptures from the original into the Latin version known as the Vulgate, firmly believed that this grotto was the birthplace of the Saviour. The cave in which Jerome lived and made his translation was, until twenty years ago, a bare native rock-cave, but about that time it was plastered over and made into a room. The writer saw the cave before this was done, and much regrets the necessity for converting it into a squared room, but was told that it became necessary to strengthen the foundations, owing to the great weight above, to prevent the roof of the cave from falling in. Jerome is buried beneath the church, and his tomb, as also that of his helper Pauline, is shown. Although there is no reason to doubt that the event to commemorate which the church is built took place here, and so the spot can be revered by all Christians alike, yet it is to be deplored that—as is usual with the sacred places—so many doubtful accretions have been added; and, as in the case of the Holy Sepulchre, numerous other holy sites are shown to travellers and pilgrims. Near by is the altar of the innocents, the altar of the three kings, the chapel of Joseph, where he was warned in a dream, the spring of the holy family, and the milk grotto, on the floor of which a drop of the Virgin's milk is said to have fallen; and to this day the dust collected from the floor is sold to pilgrims to mix with their bread, as it is said to increase the flow of milk in women with their babies, and even in animals. Surely human credulity can go no farther than this, and yet—oh, tell it not in Gath!—that milk grotto is one of the most popular resorts visited, not merely by the pilgrims, but by tourists also, and the dust from the floor is eagerly purchased.

On emerging from these places of depraved imagination, it is refreshing in more ways than one to walk again into the open air, and from one of the terraces of the hill-side



MRS. FINN'S HOUSE, ABRAHAM'S VINEYARD



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ANCIENT WINEPRESSES

look towards the East and scan the fields of Boaz and the fields of the shepherds. It was somewhere out there that Boaz saw Ruth gleaning among the reapers, and, falling in love with the young widow at first sight, soon began to manifest that love by the marked attention he gave her. It was easy for us, standing there one May morning, to imagine the idyllic scene, one of the most charming in Old Testament story; for the harvests are still gathered in under the same conditions in this hitherto unchanging land, and we saw a young maiden walk in among the reapers in these very fields to glean, but unconscious that we saw in her a modern Ruth. The subsequent doings in that old-time love match, though somewhat strange to our ideas, were in strict propriety according to the customs of those days, and Ruth was only exercising her legal right. The marriage thus strangely brought about was most happy in its results, and Ruth not only became the great-grandmother of King David, but the ancestress of the Saviour of mankind. The exact field pointed out by tradition as that where Boaz met Ruth may or may not have been the place—none can know for a certainty; but it was certainly up this path towards Bethlehem that Ruth and Boaz climbed from the fields below; and up this same path Naomi and Ruth walked when they came to Bethlehem from their bereaved Moabitish home.

Again, standing here, yon shepherd lad, minding his father's flock, and amusing himself in his lonely task by slinging stones at a mark, reminds us of another pastoral scene; for somewhere in these fields young David, the son of Jesse, tended his father's flock, and the shepherd boy we see—and, indeed, every shepherd we come across in this land—is a reminiscence of David's early life. Perhaps it was in these very fields he killed the lion and the bear in defending his sheep; and then, thinking of the protecting care of his God, he exclaimed: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." It was hereabouts, when guarding his sheep on some moonlight night, he inquired: "Lord, what is man, that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man,

that Thou visitest him?" The sling and the stone used by the lad we see practising, and with which he almost invariably hits his mark, remind us of David's preference for this as a weapon of warfare, rather than the sword and the shield, with which he was unfamiliar, in his contest with Goliath; for David had confidence in his unerring aim—constant practice had made him so proficient that he won an easy victory over Israel's opponent.

There is little mention of David in connection with Bethlehem after his victory over Goliath; but he became the sweet singer of Israel, and the leader of the Church's praise till the end of time.

And yet again we think of another scene that occurred near by, for somewhere in those plains below us the shepherds heard with wonder of the advent of the Messiah. The traditional shepherds' field is now enclosed by a stone wall, and planted with olive trees; an underground grotto in the enclosure, now transformed into a church, is asserted to have been the scene of the shepherds' awakening to the angels' song. It may have been the place, for shepherds usually drive their sheep into a cave at night, if no khan, or sheepfold, is near, while they themselves guard the entrance, but here again room must be left for fancy; we know not for certain that this was the spot, nor does it matter; we are satisfied that it was near here the first Christmas anthem was sung, and near here the greatest event in the history of the world took place: for hereabouts the Babe of Bethlehem was born.

Another connection with David's life, to which some fancy must be allowed play, is pointed out in the well which bears his name at the north end of the town. It will be remembered that when David was hiding in the cave of Adullam, and Bethlehem was garrisoned by the Philistines, he expressed the longing desire: "Oh that some one would give me to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem that is at the gate!" Presumably the water that was within his reach was rain-water, and insipid to the taste; and the water in the well longed for was cool spring



EMMAUS



LEADING THE WAY



TOMB OF THE JUDGES

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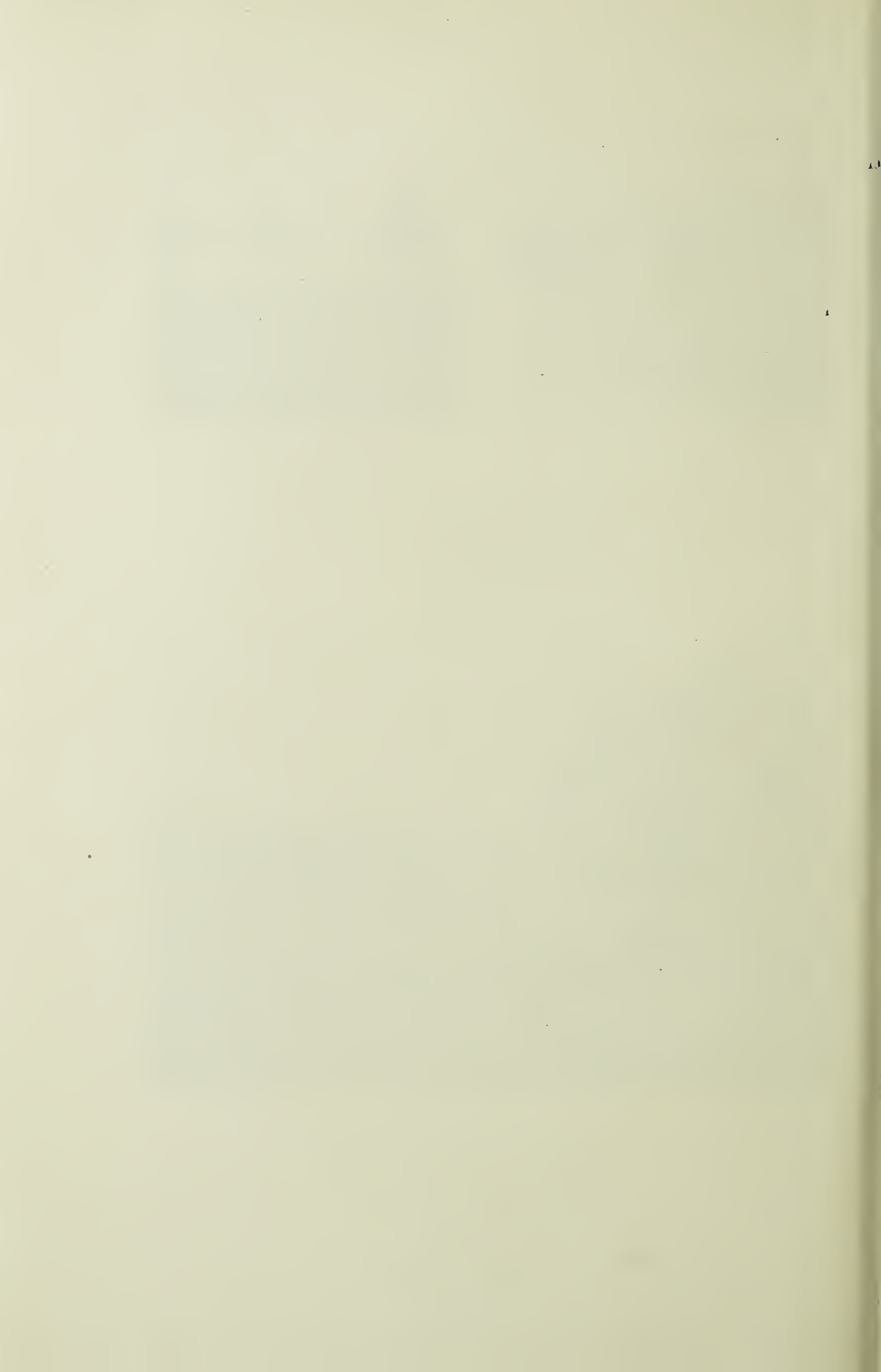


MIZPEH



EMMAUS

| To face p. 112



water, so that he longed for the thirst-quenching liquid. Three mighty men heard the wish expressed, stole through the Philistines' camp, and brought their lord the cooling draught for which he had longed; but he, recognising the way in which they had hazarded their lives, refused to drink it, and poured it away. It seemed an ungrateful proceeding of his, but intended no doubt as a deterrent to risking their lives unnecessarily again.

CHAPTER IX

TO MAR SABA, DEAD SEA AND JERICHO

AN interesting excursion that used to be made by tourists, more than it is now, is to the Dead Sea via Bethlehem and Mar Saba. Since, however, the journey to the Dead Sea can now be made all the way by carriage from Jericho, the route via Mar Saba has lost its popularity, and as an independent visit can be made to Mar Saba from Jerusalem and back in a day, by horse or donkey, this would be the better plan to adopt, and is quite worth the journey by those who have the time to spare for the purpose. Ladies, however, are not admitted into the interior of the convent under any circumstances—apparently the presence of ladies is not thought to be conducive to the sanctity of the monks. We ride down the gorge of the Kidron, and turning to the left just beyond the Arab encampment, we enter the Valley of Fire, as this part of the gorge is called, through a perfect wilderness of sand and rock; a fitting place, surely, in which to liberate the scapegoat bearing away the sins of the people; and soon we espy the monastery hanging, eyrie-like, on the edge of the rocks overlooking the gorge. Many of the rocky cliffs adjoining the Kidron valley are honeycombed with caves, and in some of these the early Christians found a retreat from persecution. Others retired here to be far away from the world, its temptations and cares; and of these St. Saba appears to have been the most remarkable.

He became famous for his sanctity; the devout gathered round him in great numbers, and here in the fifth century he founded the convent which bears his name. It is a large castle-like stronghold, in the midst of wild scenery, utterly barren and desolate. Whether it is viewed from



A WATCH TOWER



ABRAHAM'S OAK



PLAINS OF MAMRE

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without or within it is one of the most weird places in the world. It has been ravaged several times by plundering hordes, who have conceived its wealth to be enormous, and many a fierce struggle and massacre has been witnessed here. A grim memento of one of these conflicts—that when the Persian hordes under Chosroes, in 614, attacked and plundered the place, killing most of the monks—is the adornment of the walls of the Chapel of St. Nicholas with the skulls of the slain, who are remembered as martyrs. It was plundered in modern times as lately as 1835, after which it was made additionally safe by the Greek Church, to whom it belongs, and even at the present time a strict look-out has to be maintained, as Bedouin Arabs are often prowling about its walls, watching for a chance of robbery, if such should occur.

The tomb of St. Saba stands in the centre of the courtyard, although the bones of the saint have long since been carried away to Venice. The rock-cave in which he lived with a lion is shown by a lay brother, who has the duty of entertaining guests, and a rude drawing of the amiable lion with the saint is painted on the walls of the cave.

About seventy monks reside here utterly apart from the world, and once they enter the walls they never come out again; some of the older of them have been shut in there for forty years, and during all that time have never seen the face of a woman, or heard the laughter of a child. Poor creatures! I could not help but pity them, as I looked on their sad, dejected countenances, and I thought—What a pity it is for them to be living under such ascetic rules that provide for them no enjoyment in life; and I thought, too, I should like to turn a dozen bouncing, laughing girls among them for a few hours to enliven them up a bit. But they have one pleasant recreation, they make friends with the birds of the valley, which become so tame as to eat from their hands.

On one of the occasions when I stayed there the night, the moon was shining full, and as the weather was hot and the fleas troublesome—it is astonishing how friendly

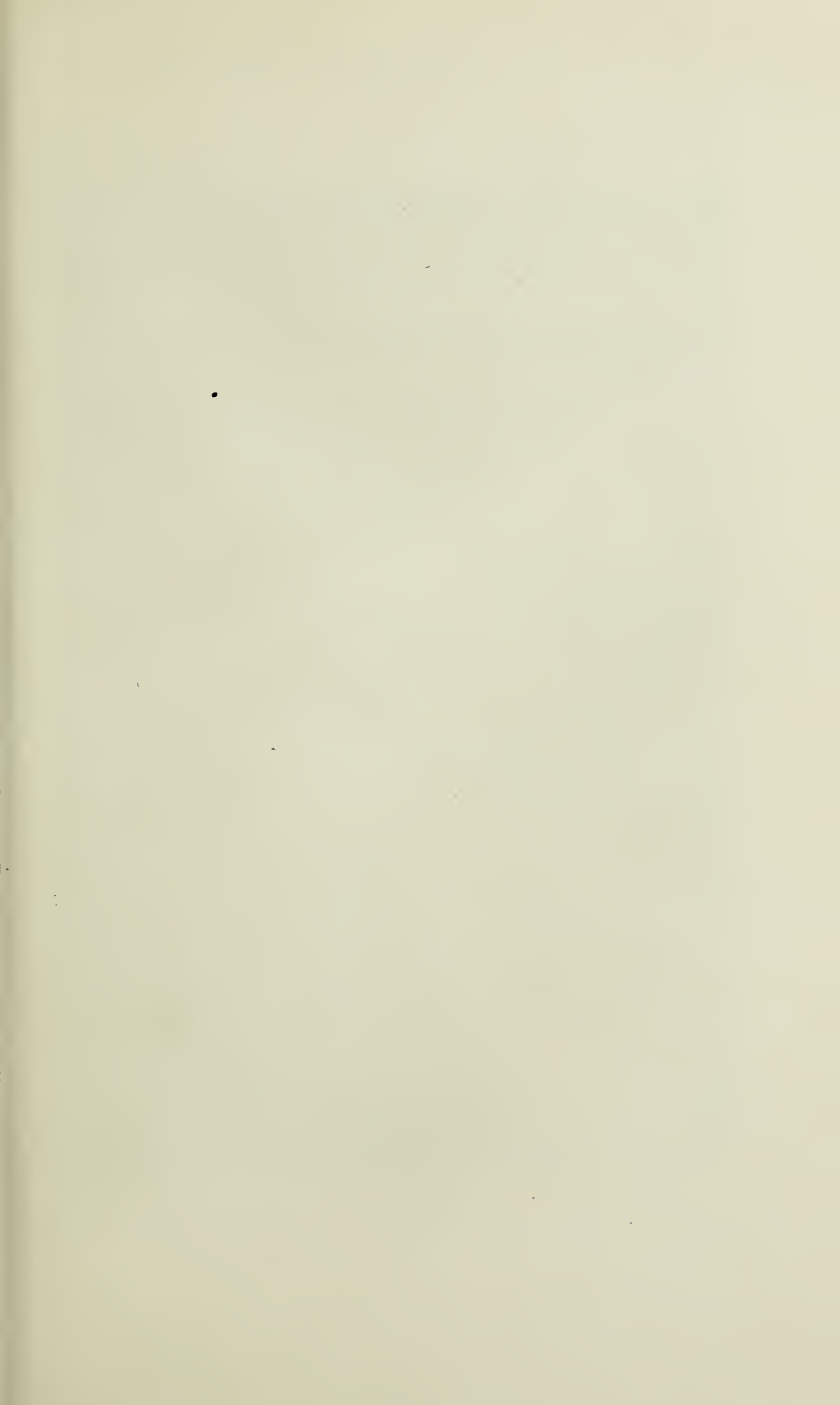
those fleas of Mar Saba like to be—I got up from the divan on which I had been reclining and trying to sleep, but could not; I walked up the outside staircase on to the roof. The scene in the bright moonlight was most striking—the yawning gulf five hundred feet below; the brilliant stars above looking as if suspended from heaven's ebon vault; the silence that could be felt. The awful weirdness of the surroundings and the novelty of the experience left an impression I shall never forget. I remembered it was at this place the monk Stephen composed, nearly a thousand years ago, the hymn we now sometimes sing, and, remembering which, I tried to sing on the roof that night—

“Art thou weary, art thou languid,
 Art thou sore distrest?”
 “Come to Me,” saith One, “and, coming,
 Be at rest.”

I thought that whatever that man knew, or did not know, he did know the Gospel when he wrote—

“If I ask Him to receive me,
 Will He say me nay?”
 “Not till earth and not till heaven
 Pass away.”

And there I thanked God for the blessing of our hymnology; for as these hymns crop up during the centuries gone by they let us know that the light of the Gospel has never become utterly extinct. As we turn our telescopes back across the ages it does sometimes seem that religion had almost died out, and then, when we think the outlook appears the darkest, suddenly, some song—like a meteor—blazes across the horizon, and lets us know that there was some messenger of the Cross bearing aloft the standard of the Crucified One; and we take heart from the fact, and feel we can look forward hopefully to the time when the glorified Church shall not only exclaim: “Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of Thy Glory”; but each one with new and exalted powers shall join in strains which seraphs can scarcely reach, that never-ending song, which





INTERIOR OF CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY

shall echo and reverberate throughout the vast creation :
 "Unto Him Who hath loved us, and washed us from our
 sins in His own precious blood, . . . to Him be glory and
 dominion for ever and ever."

The journey may be continued from here to the Dead Sea; the way is a rough one, but as the views of the Dead Sea and the Jordan valley burst upon us it compensates for the fatigue, for the panorama before us is grand and beautifully impressive. We pass by Arab encampments on our way, and formerly we should have stood a chance of being held up and robbed; for, as of old time, these sons of Ishmael have their hand against every man, and every man's hand is against them. And so till quite recently a guard was necessary to accompany every party; but now mounted police patrol the district all around, and travelling is rendered more safe. But we often ask ourselves, What is to be the end of these nomadic tribes of the desert? Gradually they are being pushed farther and farther from the grazing grounds they have used from time immemorial by the onward march of civilisation, and the outlook for them is a problem we cannot solve.

We rapidly descend the sides of the valley and find the beams of a scorching sun strike us with tropical vigour, for the valley we are descending and the Dead Sea before us lies in a deep Ghor; the Dead Sea being reputed to be the lowest sheet of water in the world, being some thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. We get parched with thirst as we ride on, and it is refreshing to look down on this lake of bright, clear, transparent water. Alas! for those who think they can allay their thirst with the liquid, for it is salt as brine and bitter withal. There is

"Water, water everywhere;
 Nor any drop to drink."

This inland sea—this great melancholy marvel—has no outlet in consequence of its depression, and yet, although it receives all the waters of the Jordan and other streams, its level does not rise. The intense heat here causes a

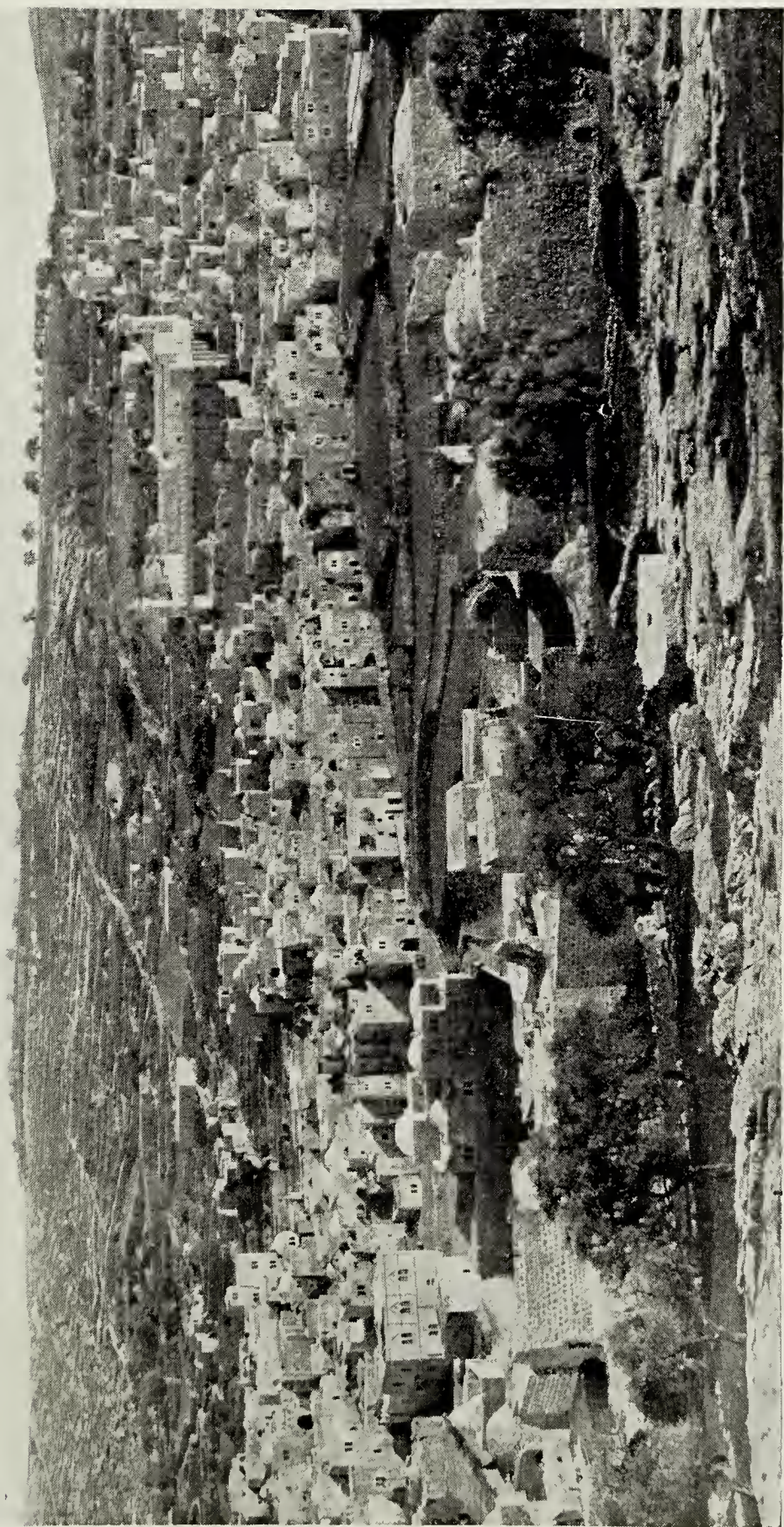
constant evaporation, which keeps the surface of the water at a pretty regular level; but the evaporation leaves all the salts which the fresh water of the rivers dissolves in their courses, and with which the banks abound, behind in the sea, so that it becomes a saturated solution, and hence of a higher specific gravity than water usually is.

From this arises the curious circumstance that it has a greater sustaining power than water usually has, and persons may easily float on its surface or stand in an upright position without sinking.

Most persons try the effect of bathing in the Dead Sea, and find that, although it is easy to float, it is difficult to swim, as the feet fly up. In the case of a person suffering from any abrasion of the skin, or irritation, he is advised not to try this bath, as the saline water would cause great pain. Many most absurd and wild stories have been believed in the past about this mysterious sea—that no bird can fly over its waters, no vegetation grow near its banks, no person breathe its poisonous exhalations, and that in its centre is a vast abyss into which the accretions of water descends; but these and other stories, equally wild, have been proved over and over again to be myths.

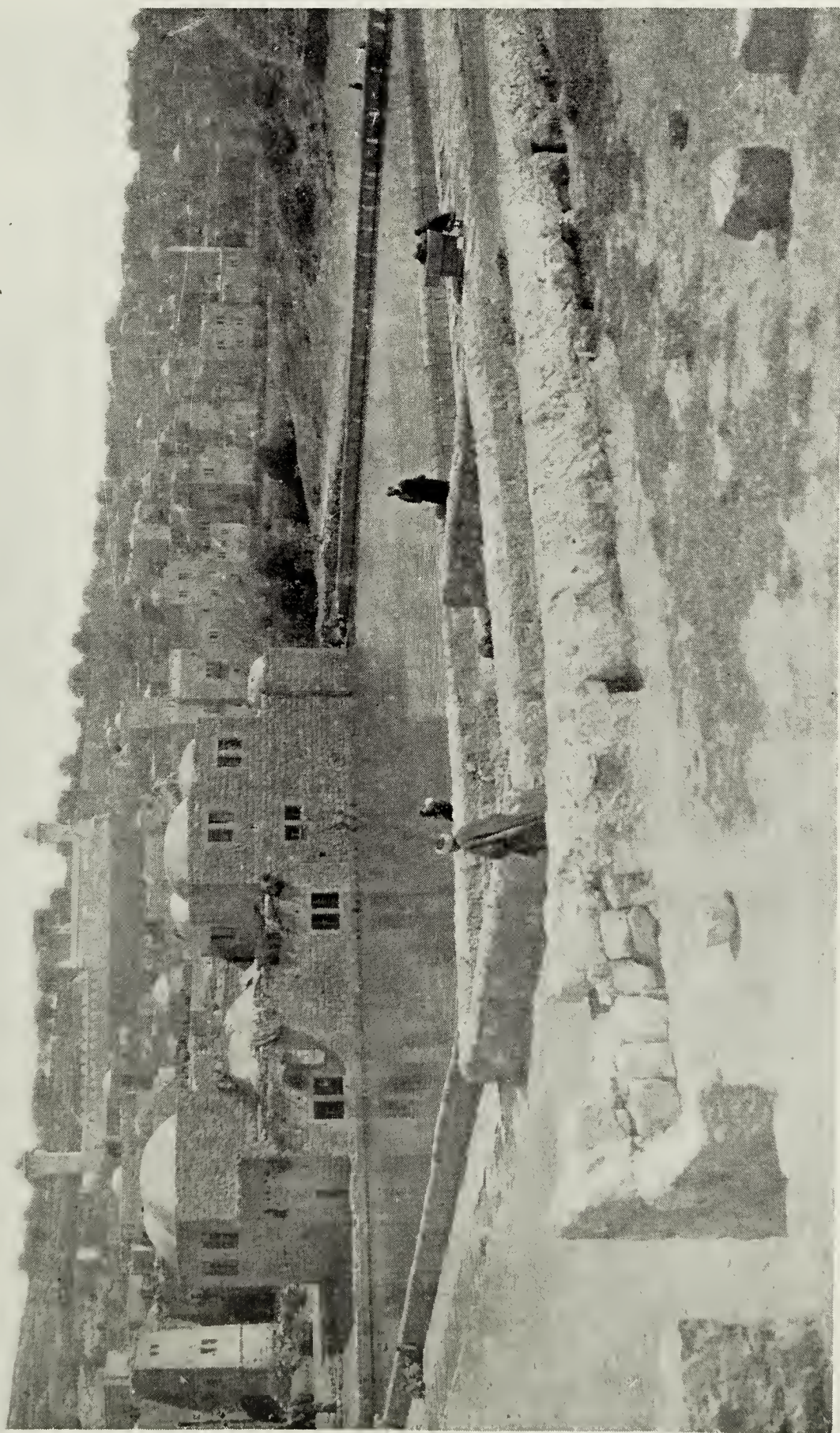
At the south end of the Dead Sea—a region rarely visited—are to be seen pillars of salt rising from the ground, and one of these is known to the Arabs as *Bint Sheik Lot*, or Lot's wife, a view of which we give.

The sites of Sodom and Gomorrah have long been the subject of speculation and dispute: many thinking that the Dead Sea covers them both; but they were expressly called, we must remember, the Cities of the Plain, and no doubt they stood in the plain beside the Jordan, at the north end of the Dead Sea; the many mounds which stand round about here, and which contain fragments of pottery, sun-dried bricks, and fragments of pillars and worked stones—all indicate that populous cities existed here in remote times, and it is probable that these mark the sites of the lost cities.



HEBRON

[To face p. 118]



POOLS AT HEBRON

[To face p. 118

We ride across the scorching plain, encrusted over its surface with glittering salt, and in about an hour come to the trees and shrubs which line the Jordan's banks; we now follow the banks, catching glimpses here and there through the dense foliage of the windings of the beautiful river, and presently we come to the place known as The Fords. Here, the dragomen tell us, the Children of Israel crossed the Jordan, under Joshua, when they entered the land of promise, and also that it was here the Saviour came to be baptized of John.

We are glad to believe this is the place where these events occurred; it is certainly more easy to believe it than to disprove it; and this one thing is certain amid all the mists of uncertainty about actual sites—this is the Jordan, the river of which we read and of which we sing.

Our flesh felt uncomfortably sticky from the salts of the Dead Sea, which exuded from the pores of our skin during the hot ride across the plain, and we were glad to plunge in the sweet fresh water and wash off the crystallising salts, after which we felt more comfortable. But bathing here requires great care, as the mid-current is swift, and many have been swept away and lost their lives. Our dragoman was a native of Jaffa, where every one from infancy learns to swim, and he, being an exceptionally strong swimmer, essayed to swim across; but even he landed on the opposite side in an exhausted condition, and had to take a long rest before he ventured back again. So that here I understood the meaning of the passage—as I had never done before—"If thou hast run with the horsemen, and they have wearied thee . . . how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" It means, if running with the horses has wearied one, how in the strong flood, where greater strength and endurance is required, would he fare? The water here is not at all clear, it is muddy, and the colour of clay; hence many tourists are very disappointed in the appearance of the stream, which they imagine should be clear and bright. But the fall of the river is so great, it rushes down between its banks with such force, that it

washes a deal of mud from its sides, and so the water looks very dirty.

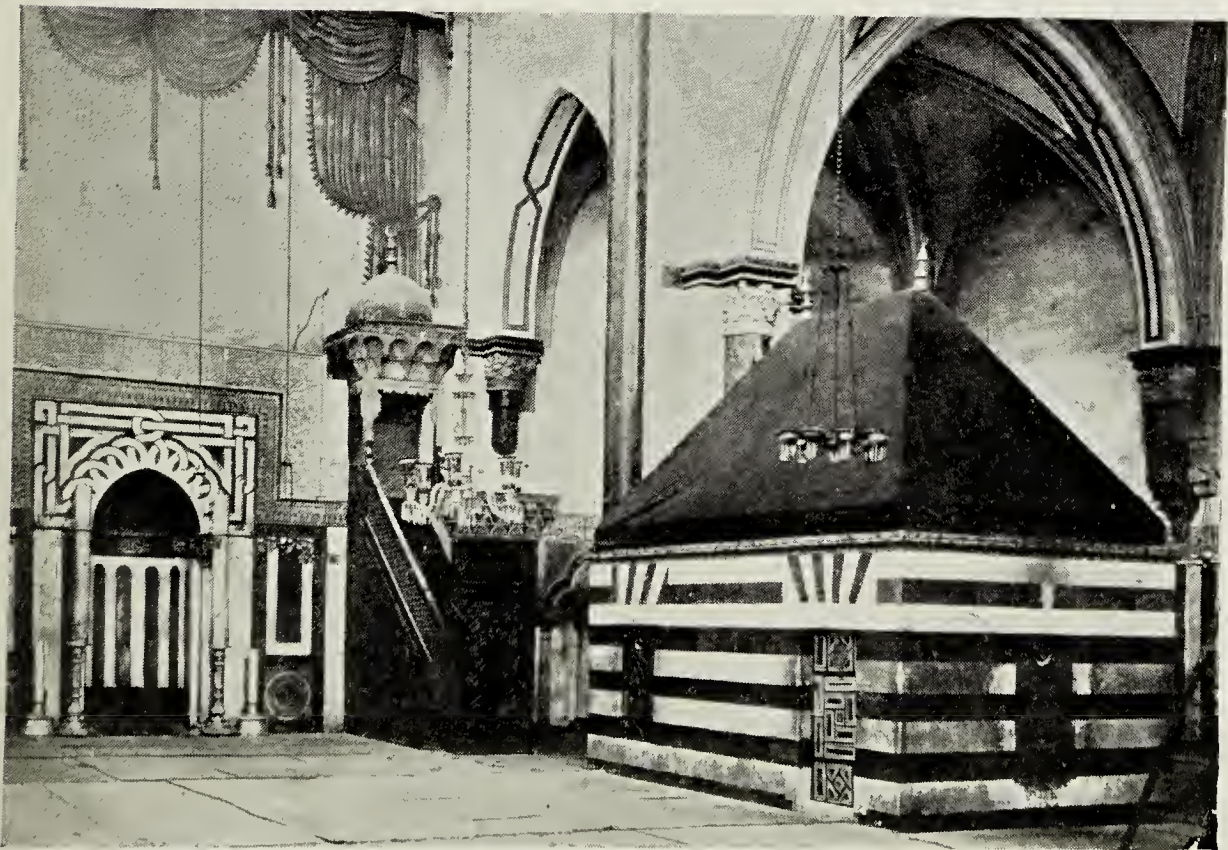
Well might Naaman exclaim, when the prophet told him to go and wash in the Jordan seven times: "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean?" Yes, Naaman, your waters are pure and clear, it is true; but then, there is this element of obedience to the command required to effect the cure the prophet holds out, and the Abana and Pharpar are not the Jordan; your servant was wiser than you when he suggested that if the prophet had asked you to do some great thing you would not have demurred, and you were wise in accepting the suggestion; and by bathing in the river you got cured. But although the water is muddy, the river is a beautiful one. Lovely trees and shrubs, as oleanders, willows, crimson-flowered boranthus, poplars, terebinths, acacias, and other plants line its banks, and reeds rising more than twelve feet high, with their feathery plumes waving in the breeze, reminding us of "the reed shaken with the wind." Beautiful birds with a plumage like our pheasant fly up as we approach, and wild ducks and geese we saw in abundance as we floated in a boat noiselessly down the stream toward the Dead Sea, one bright November day. Only one dwelling did we notice as we sailed down the river, and this was a house made of reeds in a most lonely place and inhabited, we found to our astonishment, by a Scotchman. We knew the Scotch were ubiquitous, but we hardly expected to find a specimen here. He seemed to get his living by fishing and shooting the wild fowl, and probably he made a visit to Jericho occasionally for other supplies. But what could be the tragedy of his life? Had he been crossed in love, or disappointed in friends? did he get hopelessly insolvent, or might he be a fugitive from justice, or what? Who can fathom his retirement from the world, and his living this Robinson Crusoe kind of life? Anyway, he was quite safe from the tax-collector here, and he seemed happy enough in his beautiful sur-



A SKIN BOTTLE



ENTRANCE TO MOSQUE



INTERIOR OF MOSQUE AT HEBRON

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roundings, where he might fancy he was monarch of all he surveyed. We occasionally climbed up on the opposite bank, where sulphur lay scattered over the mounds, and when we touched it with a lighted match it took fire and spread about to other fragments. Several sulphur springs issued from the banks into the stream, bitumen jutted out of the ground, and petroleum oozed through in places. Indeed, the whole district seemed charged with combustible material, and it was no wonder if a violent thunderstorm and lightning, or a volcanic eruption should have caused the destruction of the Cities of the Plain in such a locality.

Every schoolboy knows that the Jordan is the principal river in Palestine; that it rises in the valley at the foot of Mount Hermon, flows through the Sea of Galilee, and then winds tortuously down the ravine, till it loses itself in the Dead Sea; and every schoolboy knows, too, that there is something more than mere geographical interest attaching to the river. Who is there, I wonder, who would not like to see it for themselves? and why? And what is the reason that thousands of pilgrims from distant climes come to visit the stream, and bathe in its waters? What is the dynamic, attracting force that draws so many to stand on its banks and "cast a wistful eye"? It is because of its sacred associations, because here the Israelites crossed over into the promised land, because in it Naaman washed and was cured, and more than all because in its waters the Saviour was baptized by the Forerunner, saying: "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

An hour's ride across the plain brings us to Eriha, the modern Jericho. As we crossed through the wooded bed of the Wâdy Kelt, through which the Cherith flows into the Jordan, a wild boar dashed by; other animals also abound in the neighbourhood, for, as every traveller knows, the howling of jackals round Jericho itself disturbs his rest at night, although, as lately the governor of the district has had numbers of them poisoned, it is not so bad now as formerly.

In passing through the plain of Jericho the dragoman points to a large oak tree away on the right, and informs us that is the site of Gilgal. Perhaps it is, and there are ruins of foundations there; but, of course, these can have no connection with the time when Joshua caused twelve stones to be set up as a memorial of their crossing the river and the place where they pitched their first camp in the land they had come to possess. It was, however, somewhere here in this plain that they began to eat of the corn of the land, and the manna ceased. Here their camp remained while the spies journeyed to view the land, and not far away they hid in Rahab's house; after which Joshua's army went round the city, and yon hills echoed back the shrill blasts of the trumpets which the priests blew.

On again, passing through the bed of the stream, a square tower is seen at the entrance to the village, and we are told that that is the house of Zacchæus; the Greek hospice a little farther on is also claimed as the site of Zacchæus's house, and a large sycamore tree in the grounds is shown to pilgrims as the tree into which he climbed to see the Saviour pass by. Numerous traces of ruins have been found in the grounds of the hospice, consisting of squared blocks of stone, carved entablatures, broken columns, etc., indicating that here existed in former times a place of importance; but whether this be the Jericho of Christ's day or of some other time, it is impossible with any certainty to say.

Most probably, however, there were at this time two Jerichos a mile apart from each other, and thus is explained the apparent discrepancy between two of the evangelists in the narrative of the restoring of the sight of the blind beggars, one saying that "Christ was drawing nigh unto Jericho" and the other that "He was leaving it." No doubt the beggars would sit on the wayside midway between the two places, and Matthew is thinking of the old city, and Luke of the new. The houses of the present time are simply miserable, rubbish-heap habitations, con-

sisting of bushes woven round poles ; and till lately covered with bushes on the top for protection from the sun's rays. The governor of the place has lately been trying to introduce some improvements, and he has encouraged them to form span roofs to their dwellings and plaster them with mud to throw off the rain. The dwellings each consist of one room, where humans, animals, and vermin all live together, and the people are sadly degraded in their habits and morals. Their compound is surrounded by an impenetrable hedge of the thornbush, which everywhere in this locality thrives luxuriantly. These bushes possess formidable sharp spike-like thorns, and probably are the shrubs from which the crown of thorns was made for the head of Christ, hence it is called "Spina Christi." The natives gather the wild bushes of the neighbourhood to make fires for their cooking ; they blaze away for a short time, and in the hot ashes they bake the thin cakes which is their bread. It is to this the Preacher refers when he says : "As the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of fools." That is, they make a great blaze for a short time, but it soon ends in ashes and death.

The monks about here make up crowns of these thorns to sell to tourists and pilgrims, of various sizes and prices ; but they are not alone among those who think, evidently, that everything relating to Christ and Christianity may be commercialised.

It is the custom of persons in our country, when they wish to pass to their friends a rather doubtful compliment, to "wish them at Jericho." It is, however, a very pleasant place as regards climate during the winter months, and would make a fine winter resort ; but no European could live there during the summer : it is too hot, and even in spring the delight of "sitting under one's own vine and fig tree" can well be imagined.

No doubt the great heat there has much to do with the physical degeneracy and squalor of the feeble and lazy natives, the summer climate being too enervating for health and energy. Although modern Jericho is such a poor

place it has a history out of all proportion to its present importance.

It was here, or near by, the Israelites celebrated their first Passover in the promised land. It was near here the walls of old Jericho fell down, followed by that fearful panic, ending in blood, havoc and death.

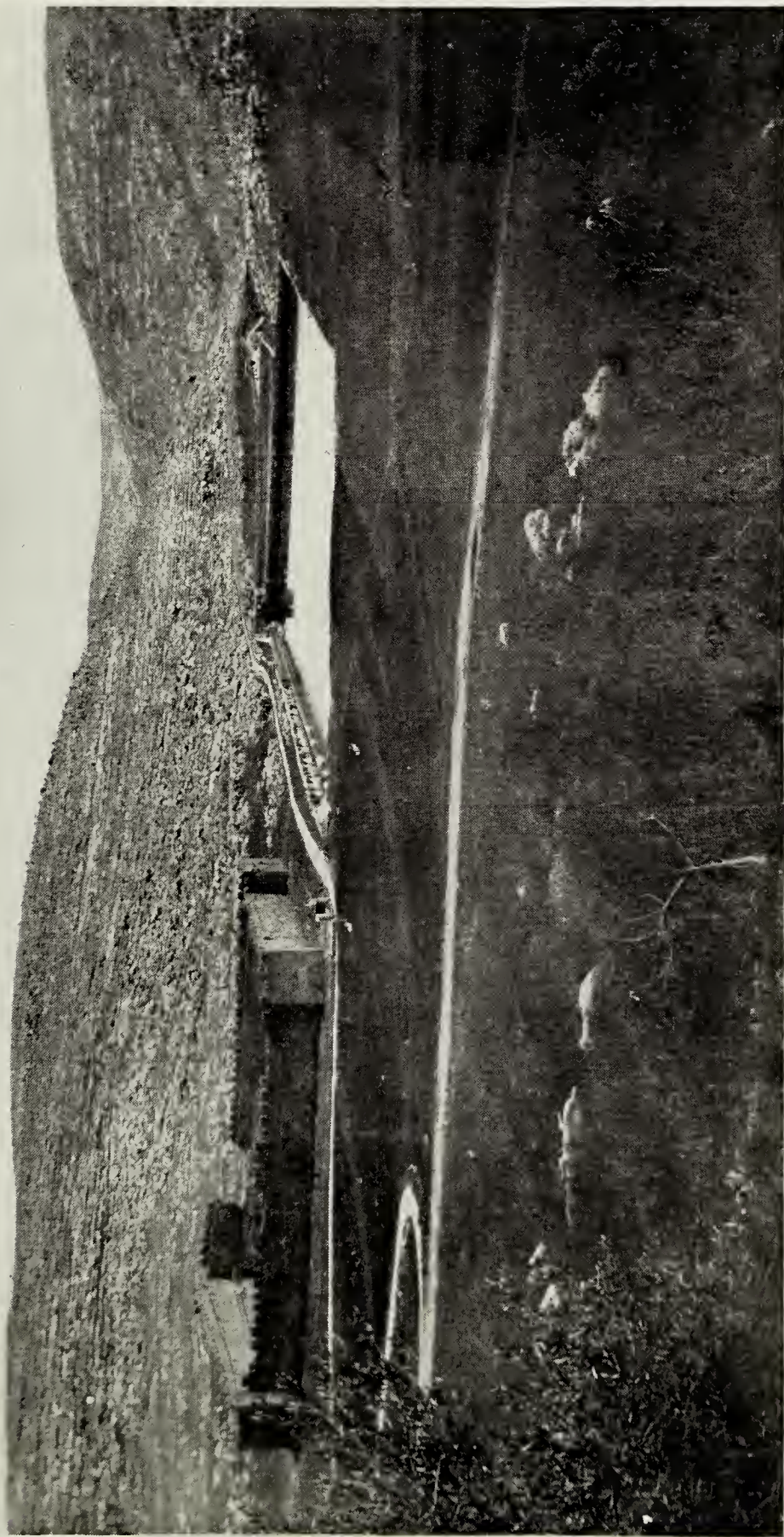
Near here Rahab with her kindred sat with tear-dimmed eyes, as they watched the smoke of their burning city ascending. Here the whole tribe of Judah assembled to welcome King David back from his exile after the death of Absalom. It was to this place the Saviour came and abode in the house of Zacchæus, and here He cured the blind and the lame who sat by the wayside begging.

The plain of Jericho comprises some 25,000 acres of the richest land in the world, and if it were properly cultivated and irrigated, corn of all kinds, sugar, spices and fruits could be abundantly and profitably grown. Palm trees grow here rapidly, and bananas are seen with their huge clusters of fruit hanging, and vines grow to perfection. Indeed the district, on account of its fertility and luxuriant vegetation, was given by Mark Antony as a love present to Cleopatra, who afterwards sold it to Herod the Great. At this time it was covered with beautiful gardens, and embellished with groves of palm trees and avenues of sycamores. Herod built here sumptuous palaces, and made it his winter residence, as being the most beautiful spot for the purpose in his dominions; he also constructed aqueducts to bring a pure supply of water from the mountains, traces of which remain.

He lavished his wealth on building baths, and hippodromes, and castles to defend the passes around, and it was here he died after suffering terrible agony, but directed that he should be buried in the Herodium near Bethlehem.

His cruel nature asserted itself to the last, for during his last illness he caused all the principal Jews of the country to be imprisoned in the circus, and decreed that at his death they should all be killed—an order which his sister Salome wisely neglected to carry out.

As early as the fourth century Jericho was made the



POOLS OF SOLOMON

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seat of a bishopric, and the whole district for many miles round contains ruins of churches, monasteries, convents and hermitages, and even to this day many monks may be found living as hermits in caves in the neighbouring hillsides and mountains.

During the last few years a good deal of the plain has been brought under cultivation, and where the land is irrigated, corn grows rapidly and yields abundant crops even during the first year after the land is broken up. We saw two acres of tomatoes being grown there during the winter, and yielding an immense crop; palm trees, bananas and vines still flourish luxuriantly, and during the last time we were there, a syndicate of Jews was negotiating for the purchase of the whole district. Modern Jericho, with its hotels, lies a mile from the site of old Jericho—the Jericho of Joshua's day—which is situated close by the Sultan's pool, as it is now called, or Fountain of Elisha, it being generally conceded that this is the spring whose waters were healed by him. The Scripture account runs thus: "And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, . . . but the water is naught. . . . And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast salt in there, and said, 'Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters.'" The waters rush out from the foot of the hill in great volume, and are perfectly sweet and delicious.

The ex-Sultan, who laid claim to the pool, and indeed to the whole district, as his private property, had the pool cleared out, enlarged, and the overflow conducted by a channel to the lands below, where—like the Nile—it brings life and fertility in its onward march. During the last few years important excavations at the Tell, or mound near the fountain, have revealed the fact long since suspected, that here stood the Jericho of the Old Testament and of Joshua's time; also in this respect confirming the account given by Josephus. The German archæologists by whom the excavations have been carried out, very carefully had the top débris removed and carried away, gradually bringing to light houses and streets; these were systematically

measured and photographed, and then pulled down. Below the ruins thus removed was found a second city, which was treated in like manner, the reason of their removal being, that a lower Jericho—this the Jericho of Joshua's time—might be laid bare. Here was found the old Canaanitish walls which surrounded the city; strong walls they were, built of large blocks of stone, and in some places with rooms in the walls, like those in the walls of Damascus still existing. On the neighbouring hill-sides are the ruins of what evidently had been strong buildings, still visible, dating probably from crusading times.

Another Jericho—for there have been three Jerichos constructed on three different sites—was the Jericho of Herod, who appears to have built his city near the foot of the hill by the road as it comes down from Jerusalem; for here we find numerous ruins of the Roman period; and if this be the place where Herod built the city of his day, it must necessarily have been the Jericho of the New Testament, and therefore of Christ's time.

While in camp on one of our visits to Jericho, we noticed a tribe of Bedouins migrating; this they do periodically, following the seasons round foraging for herbage for their cattle, which, of course, are their chief wealth.

The cattle and camels are driven to the new pasture grounds, and then the Sheik with the tribe follow with their tents, women and children and the domestic necessities. We were interested in watching them pass by, the camels carrying first the women and children, then the tents, after that all the utensils and cooking appliances, and last of all the goats and fowls tied by their legs on the camels' backs. Poor Arabs! they are, I fear, coming on hard times, for as the population of Palestine increases, the waste lands are brought under cultivation, and they are suffering much disappointment as well as inconvenience by finding these being gradually enclosed and planted; and so they find themselves being pushed farther and farther to the bare and arid desert. It is only to be expected that conflicts do sometimes arise, as they feel they



BETHLEHEM AND THE CONVENT

are being robbed of their rights and the means of existence made harder for them.

Of course, before leaving Jericho we were visited by children pestering us for "backsheesh"; it has often been said that "backsheesh," which means a gift, is the first word children learn in Palestine, and they constantly repeat it on every chance, so that here, as everywhere else on the beaten tracks, we had the word incessantly sounding in our ears. Backsheesh is, I believe, the first word in Arabic every traveller learns; but I am bound to say this is one of the evil consequences which follow in the wake of the tourists, for in travelling in the country off the beaten tracks I never heard the word spoken.

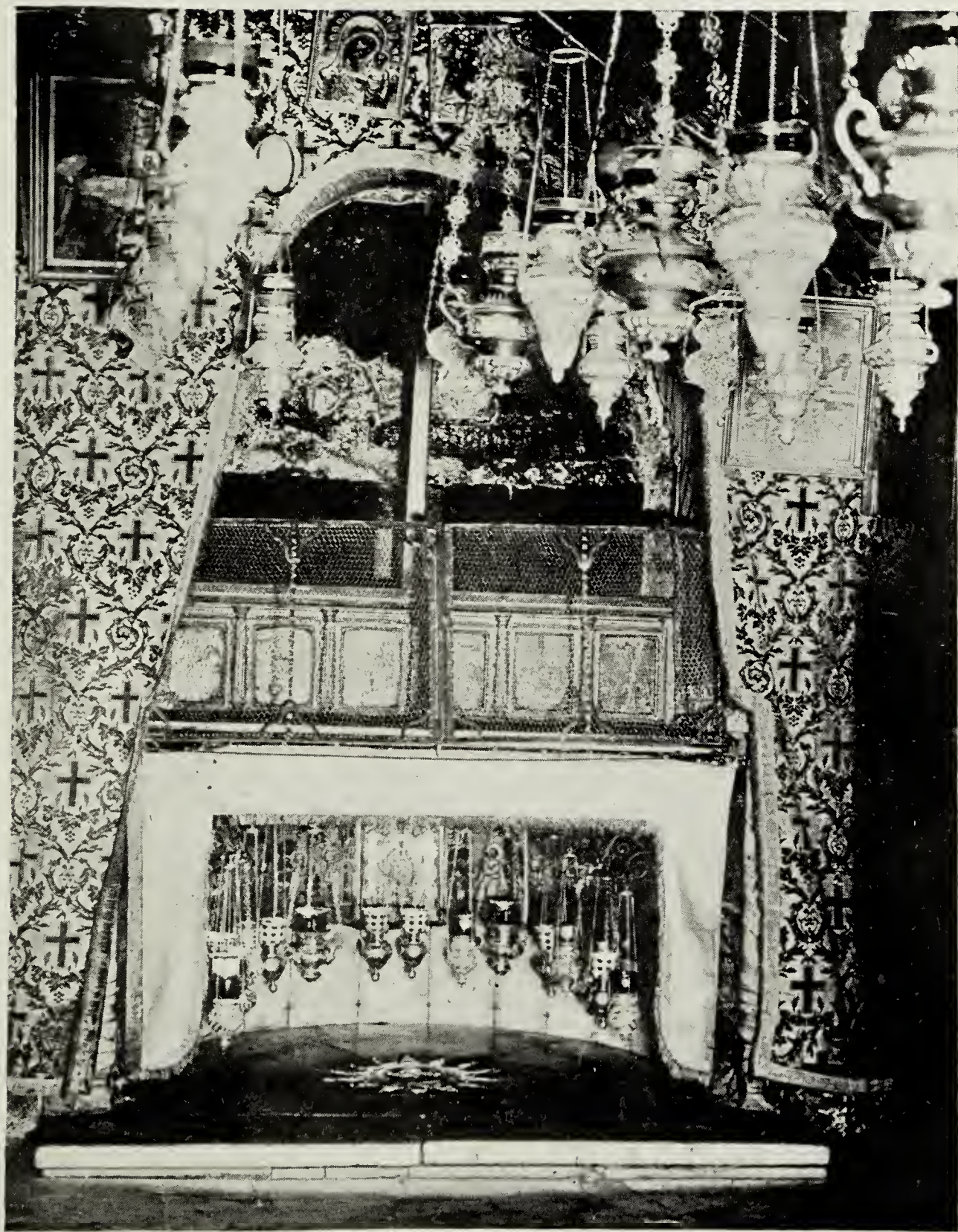
On leaving Elisha's fountain, we soon wade through the clear rushing waters of the brook Cherith, and begin to ascend the hills toward Jerusalem. On our right we were struck by the immensity of the great gorge of the Cherith, at the bottom of which the stream finds its way.

On the left are the ruins of the castles Thrax and Tauros, which Herod built to command the pass, and lying alongside the road are the remains of the aqueduct by which the waters were brought from the mountain sources to Jericho and made it into a paradise. Again, after ascending some distance, we get another good view of the gorge if we climb the little hillock on the right; and on the opposite side of the gorge we observe a narrow path which leads to the convent of Elias, a building which is said to cover the cave where Elijah hid from Ahab, and during which time he was fed by the ravens. There is probably another connection with this ravine in Old Testament history, for it is likely that David hid in one of these caves, during his flight from Jerusalem, and while here he composed the twenty-third Psalm, as he realised that the valley was to him possibly "the valley of the shadow of death." And, too, he may have been in one of those caves watching in nervous terror for the approach of his enemies, when he saw a dove hovering near by; then he noticed the dove fluttering about and showing signs of terror, for a vulture

was hovering over ready to swoop down upon it. Then he saw the dove with a supreme effort fly swift and straight for the rocks above, and just in time it escaped into a cleft of the rock too small for the vulture to enter; and comparing his own position with that of the pursued dove, he cried: "Oh, that I had the wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest."

Our next place of interest is the half-way, or Good Samaritan Inn, and here all the carriages stop, to rest and feed the horses, after the arduous climb up the hills. The worst part of the journey has now been traversed, and it is necessary that the animals should be allowed a little rest.

But why is it called the "Good Samaritan Inn"? There is no doubt that the name is suggested by the parable of the Good Samaritan; for as the Saviour's discourses and teaching were largely based on incidents and scenes around Him, it is a story that may have had its foundation in fact. Undoubtedly there has always been a wayside resting-place, or khan, here, and it is refreshing to think, as we rest here ourselves, that this spot must also have formed a resting-place for the Saviour and His disciples in their journeyings to and from Jericho. The district has always been infested with robbers, and even at the present time, although a road is made and carriages frequently pass and repass, the mounted police have to keep a strict look-out for robbers, and indeed many robberies have occurred in recent years. Almost the last time the writer came up from Jericho he met a German, who, essaying the journey alone, had been badly maltreated and robbed of all he had about him; and it is only about two years ago that the well-known proprietor of the Jordan Hotel at Jericho, in journeying from Jerusalem back to his home alone, was shot in the back and killed. Poor Mr. Pertrides! he had been working hard to get the new hotel in his garden finished, hoping to reap his reward in being able to give increased accommodation, and so secure a larger patronage. There are numerous caves by the



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SHRINE OF THE NATIVITY



A MODERN RUTH, BETHLEHEM HARVEST SCENE



THE SHEPHERDS' FIELDS

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roadside still, where robbers may lie in wait for an opportunity of plundering the unguarded passer-by. We continue our journey along the road now by easier gradients, through land that after showers is covered with herbage; but which during a dry season is as bare as the road. But what is that man doing leaning his back against that boulder of stone? Our driver looks longingly at him as if he would like to stop and join in the occupation. This is called Abraham's Stone, from the legend that Abraham carried it all the way from Hebron, and it caused his back to ache. No wonder it did, if he had done so, and no wonder that poor Abraham was here compelled to drop his load. But if it caused the patriarch's back to ache, it cures every one else of that complaint if they lean against it, and natives from all parts of the country do come to lean on it, as we see the man now doing, to get rid of their lumbago. Probably the stone gets very hot sometimes when the sun shines fiercely, and the warmth of the stone does give some ease. Anyhow, it is a remedy cheap enough, and if we do smile at our friends' credulity we may remember that there are numerous "cures" for back-ache in our own more highly civilised state of existence, scarcely so effective as a hot stone, and for which we are expected to pay a far higher price.

And now again we see before us a sharp rise in the road as it turns to the right and continues upwards in many zig-zag curves, something like a steep Swiss mountain road.

But before we climb this steep hill we stop for a few minutes at the little roadside inn at the bottom, to allow the horses to take breath, and also allow the traveller, if so inclined, to ease the horses by walking on. This spot has been identified as the Beth-shemesh of Scripture, where Shimei came out and cursed poor David, as he was fleeing from Jerusalem during Absalom's revolt; and the stone fountain just opposite, from which our drivers fetch water for the horses, is called the Apostles' Fountain, for as this is the only spring of water between Bethany and Jericho, it is only reasonable to suppose the Apostles must have

refreshed themselves here. In the Book of Joshua it is called the "sun spring," and marks the boundary line between Benjamin and Judah. We now climb the steep ascent, and understand the meaning of the phrase: "A certain man went *down* to Jericho." We toil on up the whitened road which the sun's rays have caused to glow with heat, and rounding a corner we see some Arabs taking shelter beneath the shade of a huge rock, and we are glad to do the same for a few minutes, while our carriages come up, and understand to the full the blessing of being able to sit "under the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

And now a little village appears before us, serenely nestling among the olive and fig trees on the slope of the hill-side.

How sweet and refreshing it looks to us after coming up from the bleak wilderness! amid its greenery of orchards and gardens, and as we learn it is Bethany—the sequestered retreat where the Saviour often came to repose in the home of His friends, Lazarus and his sisters—we know of no place which awakens in our minds so pleasant a picture as that of Bethany. The houses, like most of the dwellings we see in the villages of Palestine, are poor, dirty hovels, but the ruins of larger buildings are observable, among which are pointed out the house of Martha and Mary and the house of Simon the leper. Then there is the so-called tomb of Lazarus. It need hardly be said that all these places are conjectural, and no verification of them is possible; they must indeed be classed with some other objects of interest that are shown between here and Jerusalem, viz. the blasted fig tree, and the stone on which Christ sat when He sent the disciples to bring the ass's colt from Bethphage. We know that at an early period churches and monasteries were erected here, and these are no doubt the ruins of some of them. The house of Martha and Mary has been shown at different places at different periods, and the tomb of Lazarus is a palpable invention, as the stairway to the underground cave is of recent construction, and the tomb was formerly shown in the church above.





[To face p. 142

PLAIN OF JERICHO

It is more likely that Lazarus was buried in the old burying-ground, where there are some Jewish tombs near the spring. But we know the village is Bethany, the place where Jesus loved to come, and it was from Bethany He rode over Olivet when He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the people cried, "Hosanna! blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Which of the paths He took on that occasion we cannot tell, for there have always been three paths between the two places; but a pleasant one, and one He no doubt would often take in His journeyings to and fro, and one which we ourselves delighted to take often when at Jerusalem, would be that up through the olive trees above the village and by the traditional Bethphage, to the summit of Olivet, and then down by the centre path, where, half-way, stands the ruined crusading building commemorating the weeping scene; and on the other side of the path a stone tablet over the doorway leading to the Latin church records the event: *Locus in quo Dominus, Videns Civitatem Flevit super Illam*. From here we descend to the Garden of Gethsemane and Jerusalem.

CHAPTER X

GOING UP NORTH TO SAMARIA

It is fortunate for those who visit Palestine during a holiday which is limited to a few weeks that so many places of Biblical interest lie round about Jerusalem, and that it is possible by carriage-driving to visit Bethlehem, Hebron, Jericho, the Jordan, Bethany, etc., making Jerusalem, where there is no lack of hotel accommodation, their headquarters. But Jerusalem and district, although interesting and making a good holiday for those who can go no farther, is, it should be remembered, not Palestine.

And, after all, town life, least of all that town life we see in Jerusalem, which has so largely become impregnated and impermeated with Western ideas by the residence there of so many Europeans, gives no true idea of Palestine life; it is in the country, among the villages, and in the pastoral scenes that the reality of Bible events is brought before the eye, and so impress the mind as to make us feel that we are indeed in the land of the Bible.

And for those who have more time at their disposal, and can go up north to Samaria, Galilee and Damascus, we can promise that they will not be disappointed with their journey, and that they will carry away with them rich stores of knowledge and never-to-be-forgotten memories of their tour.

But for the journey north some arrangements will have to be made before starting. Formerly—indeed, till quite recently—the only available means of making the journey was by a camping tour. There were no roads, as we understand roads, only bridle-tracks, and many of these of the roughest description; no hotels or lodging-places where any one acquainted with the comforts of civilisation could





A THRESHING-FLOOR



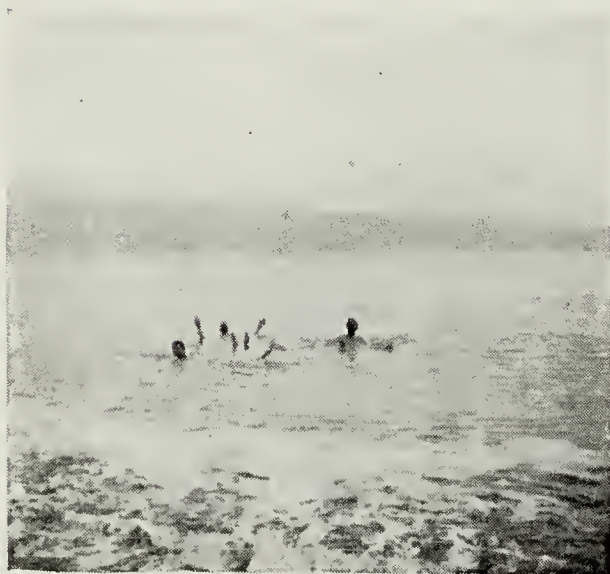
BETHLEHEM CHRISTMAS CEREMONY



SHEPHERD AND SHEEP



BETHLEHEM FROM CONVENT

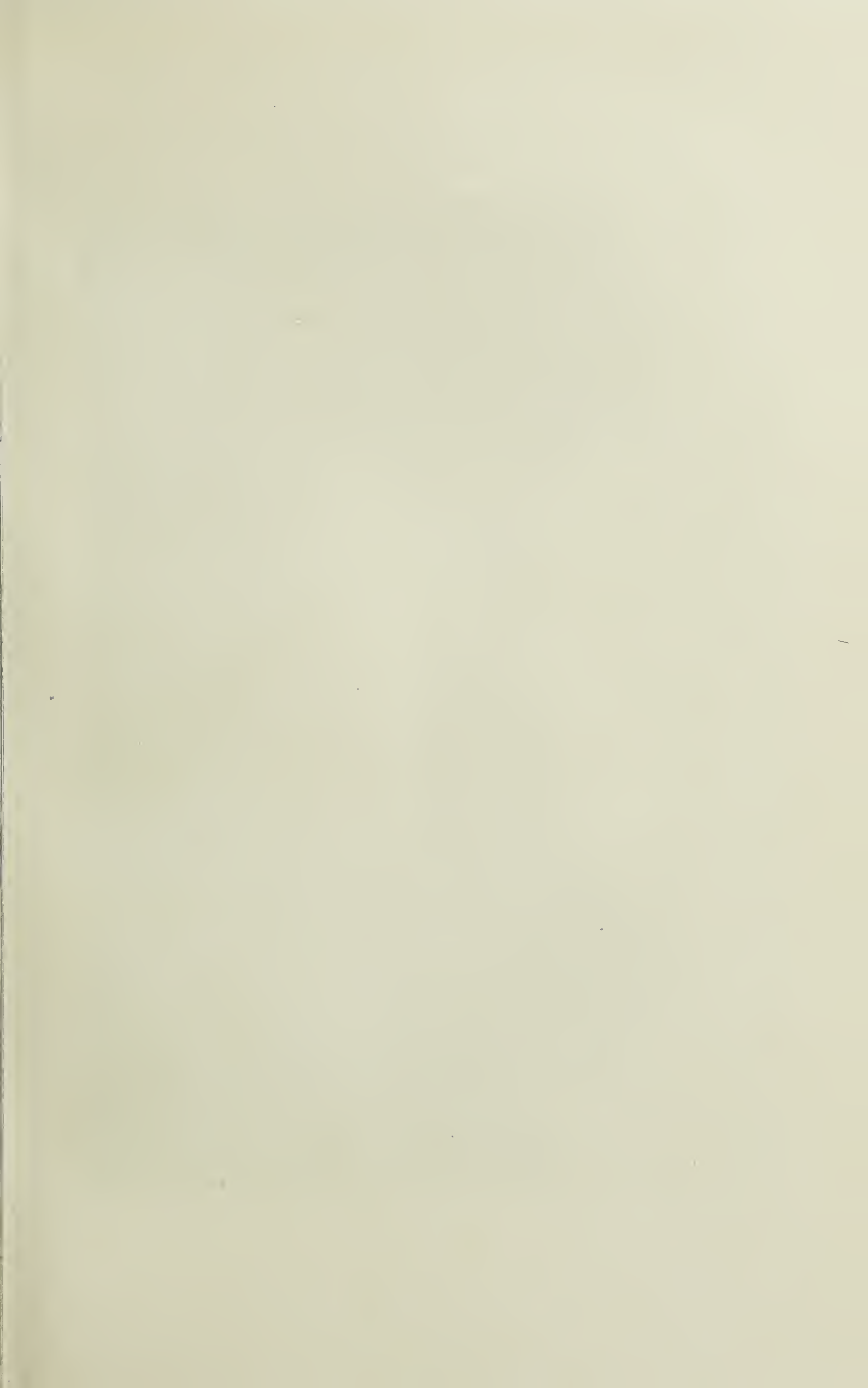


FLOATING IN THE DEAD SEA



DAVID'S WELL

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THE "SWELLING OF JORDAN"

stay; and so the journey had to be accomplished on horseback, and tents, with camp equipments, servants, food, etc., taken along.

Even now, although roads are being extended, and in a few places hotels opened for visitors by German enterprise, the roads frequently have to make a wide *détour* from the old paths in order to get proper gradients round the hills, and consequently many of the Biblical sites on the old tracks are missed altogether. Then in places where roads have not yet been made the journey must still be done on horseback, or omitted. Still, for those who cannot take a horseback tour, it will be some comfort to know that the journey can now be done by carriage as far as Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee, and to Haifa. And from the Sea of Galilee one can take train up to Damascus, making the journey between the two places in one day; then by train to Baalbec and Beyrout, at all of which places there are hotels.

So the journey north can be done without camp and all its paraphernalia, or any horse-riding at all; and the journey may be made, giving a day or two at each of the most important places, within a fortnight.

But there is no doubt that if a small party can be made, with the time at their disposal, a camping tour is by far the most enjoyable way of seeing the country, especially if taken during the spring months after the latter rains have fallen. Then the country is delightful; flowers everywhere abound, and there is such a sense of freedom; we are independent of roads and hotels; we can go where we like, and stay as long as we wish at the most pleasant and interesting places; and there is an exhilaration in the open-air life altogether wanting when travelling with the rush of the modern tourist fashion.

Moreover, with camp it is possible and most enjoyable to go up from the Sea of Galilee through the hills of Naphtali and along the upper Jordan to Dan and Banias, then by the Druse country and Mount Hermon to Damascus, where camp can advantageously be disbanded. I quite

admit, and I do it with half regret, that with the altered condition of Palestine, by the introduction of roads, railways, and hotels, the days of camping trips are numbered, and the majority of tourists will go by the easiest and most expeditious plan; but for the student wishing to visit Biblical places and seeing the old customs—perhaps soon to die out—this is the undoubtedly better way; and so once again, if only on paper, thus I wish to go.

My good reader, you have patiently followed me thus far, may we now continue our journey in imagination as friends together in camp; and I wish you may have the privilege of taking it at some time in reality under as enjoyable conditions as it has been my lot on several occasions during the last twenty-two years.

Of course, the pleasure of travelling with camp depends a great deal on the weather, but this need hardly be a matter of anxiety, if not taken too early; if taken in March and April, the conditions are likely to be ideal.

And then, in a party composed of a promiscuous group who join from various sources, the pleasure of the whole party may be marred by one or two cantankerous individuals who—as the Irish would put it—are never happy except they are miserable. There is generally one person in such a party who fancies that he or she has the worst horse, the most uncomfortable saddle, the most inconvenient place at table; whose tent is pitched in the most awkward situation, and who has not the same attention given to him as the others. It generally happens, too, that all the calamities fall upon the same person, who, of course, feels that he or she is the unfortunate or ill-used one of the party.

A dragoman, or leader, who has tact can often tame such persons before the journey proceeds too far; or if not, it is better to suggest an alternative course for them to pursue, as, for instance, going on from some point by train.

Then it often happens persons are associated who are of differing shades of religious opinion, and who are at first inclined to be disputatious. For instance, we once had in



AN ARAB ENCAMPMENT



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NATIVE DWELLINGS, JERICHO

a party a prominent Unitarian minister and a Roman Catholic priest, who did not agree at all on the subject of miracles.

But in travelling together in Palestine these religious disagreements usually end up most happily, for as we proceed we often gain knowledge which solves problems not hitherto properly understood, and we see things which shed light on questions which have been difficult to understand. The person most to be dreaded is the ignorant, opinionated man, the man who doesn't know, and doesn't want to know, because he thinks he knows everything; the man to whom ignorance is bliss, and about whom one constantly wonders why he came to this land at all.

But we will fancy our party is made up; that it is not too large or too small; that we have a well-informed and tactful dragoman, and that we have engaged a good cook; this last is, of course, most indispensable, and not difficult to obtain, thanks to another Cook, or rather Cook & Son, by whom several of such have been trained. Indeed, "Cook" is rather a talismanic word with us just now, as we have most likely made our arrangements through "Cook," that our tents are "Cook's," and that "Cook" will be the password in any case of difficulty we meet. And oh, ye scoffers! do not despise us because we are "Cook's"; we have had in times past to rescue many an unfortunate traveller who, travelling independently or with an irresponsible native contractor, has soon found himself in difficulties; and let us tell you, from some considerable experience, that if you do not know the country or the natives you might do worse than confide your plans with Cook.

Our tents have been erected for an airing and inspection among the olive trees north of the walls of Jerusalem a day or so before we start; our horses, having been selected and tested, are standing around the tents tethered to ropes fastened to the ground with pegs in the order they will have to take nightly throughout the journey; and perhaps we may be invited to partake of an evening meal before

we start, to prove the ability of our cook, and see that nothing required for our comfort is missing before the tents are struck and packed for the start. Everything seems perfect; our anticipations are at high-water mark, we are looking forward to a good time; and, fraternising with the other members of our company, we already begin to feel like a family party and at our ease. We know, too, our dragoman is a tactful and competent man, for we have met him many times before. Shukrey Hishmeh is his name; he is a renowned dragoman, and a son of a renowned dragoman of the early times, whose ambition it was to save enough money to start an hotel. It is gratifying to know that he accomplished his aim, and that he was able to build for himself an hotel at Rammalah.

Many will remember that in reading H. M. Stanley's book, *How I Found Livingstone*, he records that he took a lad with him named Selim from Jerusalem to act as an interpreter. Stanley is high in his praises of Selim, who accompanied him throughout, and he says of him "he would be faithful to the death." Selim is portrayed in several of the engravings in Stanley's book, and occupied a prominent place among the group in the ever-memorable meeting with Livingstone at Ujiji. One often wonders what became of Selim. We are able to reply: after the return home of Stanley Miss Agnes Livingstone had him articulated to a doctor, and Selim has been in practice as a doctor in Scotland ever since. Selim was a brother to the elder Mr. Hishmeh, and, of course, our dragoman is his nephew.

"He has never come back again to Jerusalem," Mr. Hishmeh tells us sadly, "but he writes regularly, and we are always glad to hear from him." Mr. Hishmeh, like Selim, and, indeed, most of the dragomen of the country, was educated in Bishop Gobat's School; the lads trained with a view to becoming dragomen are taught four languages: English, French, and German, besides, of course, their native Arabic; and some of them speak practically all the languages of Europe.

On leaving Jerusalem, we pass by the Tombs of the Kings, descend the slopes of the upper Kedron valley, and by some modern detached villa residences on the left; then, ascending to the summit of Mount Scopus, we turn to take our last look at Jerusalem, which from this point looks grand and stately. Passing over the crest of the hill, we lose sight of the Holy City, and, traversing a lofty plain, we soon see a village, which our dragoman tells us "some people think is Nob"; then a picturesque village on the left called Shafut; next, on the right, we come to a mysterious mound, which we are told may be Gibeah of Saul or Gibeah of Benjamin; some people think both these names refer to the same place, although this is doubtful. But if so, it is the birthplace of Saul, and the place where his sons were so cruelly murdered. It must have been here, too, that Abraham and Lot parted—Lot choosing the plain of the Jordan, while Abraham went and dwelt beneath the oaks at Hebron. But as we pass Bet Hannina, the dragoman points out a place about which he seems to have no shadow of a doubt—the village we have already visited on the top of that high hill, now called Neby Samwil, near which, at Mizpeh, the prophet Samuel judged Israel; and Er Ram on the adjoining hill is the Rama where he lived when he anointed Saul king. The villages we see are now but poor little hamlets, scarcely worth notice apart from their history; but what a crowd of memories come to the mind as these histories are recalled! It was in yonder valley of Aijalon that Joshua, who had come up from Gilgal to aid the besieged Gibeonites, with whom he had made a league, defeated the allied kings. It was in Rama, too, the remnant of Benjamin was left wifeless, and, like the Romans of later times, secured wives in the Sabine fashion by capturing the women of Shiloh. It was hereabouts David allowed the massacre of the seven sons of Saul, in punishment of their father's treachery when he killed those hewers of stone and drawers of water Joshua had vowed to spare. It was along this road Jeremiah fled when he escaped from the Chaldean soldiers who carried off the

Jews to Babylon. And we see how familiar the whole of this locality must have been to Isaiah, who so vividly describes it (Isa. x. 28-32) in reference to the Assyrian advance against Jerusalem: "He is come up to Ai; he is passed through Migron; at Michmash he layeth up his baggage; they are gone through the pass; they have taken up their lodging at Geba; Rama trembleth; Gibeah of Saul is fled. Cry aloud with thy voice, oh daughter of Gallim! hearken, oh Laishah! O thou poor Anathoth! Madmenah is a fugitive; the inhabitants of Gebrim gather themselves to flee. This very day he shall halt at Nob; he shaketh his hand at the Mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem."

All these places could be seen or were close at hand. But we must hasten on, for we cannot stay to identify every Biblical site and connection we pass, much as we should like to do so; and so, passing by several other villages, we stop for a few minutes at Bireh, as there is a good fountain here. This is the first place on the road north of Jerusalem that possesses a fountain of pure spring water; and it is very refreshing to slake one's thirst here after drinking for so long the insipid rain-water of Jerusalem. The fact of this being the first village on the old route with an abundant water supply made it the first halting-place of the tribes who returned from the yearly sacrifice, going northward; and it is this circumstance that gives rise to the conjecture that here Joseph and Mary first missed their son Jesus on their return from the Feast of the Passover at Jerusalem. To celebrate this circumstance the crusaders built a church at Bireh, the ruins of which are worth inspection.

Away on our left we see the important village of Ramallah, which is principally inhabited by Christians of the Latin and Greek Churches, and there are also a few Protestants. Just after leaving Bireh we see on a hill to the right Betin, the ancient Bethel; and if we have horses instead of carriages, we can make the *détour* from the road to inspect it. Bethel was formerly a frontier town of



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SONS OF ISHMAEL



BANKS OF THE JORDAN

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REED SHAKEN IN THE WIND



LOT'S WIFE



CROWN OF THORNS



THE THORN BUSH



MOUNT QUARANTANA



PALMS AT JERICHO

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RIVER JORDAN

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Benjamin, but was afterwards allotted to Ephraim. The Ark of the Covenant rested here for a time. Here Abraham reared an altar and called upon the name of the Lord, Who had just given this land to him and his seed for ever.

Here Jacob, tired after his forty miles' journey, and away from home and kindred, took a stone for a pillow, and, lying down in that place to sleep, had the vision of the angels ascending and descending the mystic ladder. Here Jeroboam set up the golden calf, seeking to win the hearts of the people from the service of God in Jerusalem; and Bethel—the house of God—was changed to Bethaven, the house of idols. Hereabouts came forth two she-bears, which tore to pieces the children who mocked at Elisha, calling after him: "Go up, thou bald head." Bethel is now only a poor, miserable little village, and thus is literally fulfilled the prophecy: "Bethel shall come to naught." Bethel is a good place at which to stop for lunch, and as after a long ride in the open air our appetites cry out for something more substantial than sight-seeing, even Biblical scenes and associations pale for a while into insignificance before the prospect of cold chicken. Others beside our party have appetites also, apparently; for the whole population of Bethel come and sit quietly around us, in the hope of picking the bones of the chicken we throw away, or even literally picking up the crumbs that are left from our repast; we give them the little that is left, but we think of the remark made by the disciples concerning the five loaves and two fishes at the scene of the hungry multitude by the Galilean lake: "What are these among so many?" Poor creatures! How they live is a mystery.

We turn aside and notice a huge tank-like reservoir, supplied by a spring, from which the people of the village above get their water, and at which we see a woman washing her clothes by banging them on a flat stone after soaking them. It is a noticeable fact that wherever there is a spring of water the women of the nearest village make it their laundry; but friction takes the place of soap. In this village, as almost everywhere else, are found the ruins

of a crusading church; and near by is a curious sacred circle of stones, said to be a remnant of the high place where the golden calf was set up. Leaving Bethel, the road is soon regained, and we perceive with pleasure that we are entering a more fruitful country; there is more greenery in the landscape, and the trees are more numerous and luxuriant.

We pass on the left a village called Jifna, the ancient Gophnah, where there is a Latin church and hospice; also the remains of an old Byzantine church and the walls of an old castle; for in the time of the Romans it was a place of considerable importance. It was taken by Vespasian during the war, and here a number of Jews deserted to the Romans.

Soon after passing through some olive plantations we enter a narrow valley, called Wâdy-el-Harameieh, in which, trickling down from the rocks (covered in places with maidenhair fern) on the left, water flows from a spring called the Robber's Fountain, the loneliness of the place perhaps suggesting the name, or it may have been a robber's haunt in bygone times. By some this glen has been identified as the "valley of Baca," and by the roadside here a number of rock-tombs are seen, from which a few years ago an enormous lot of Amorite pottery was taken, much of which was in a perfect state of preservation; there were utensils of all kinds, in which offerings of food were deposited for the dead, perfume vases, from which, notwithstanding they had lain buried for 3000 years, the perfume still exhaled; and there were a number of coins.

Near by there are the ruins of a crusading fort, or perhaps khan; and since the road has been opened for wheeled vehicles a new inn is being built near by, for wherever there is a spring of water it proves a convenient stopping-place for man and beast.

Now, passing from the valley to the heights above, we perceive with some relief our tents pitched ready for our reception, and as we dismount from our horses our pleasant-faced waiter comes from the dining-tent and cries out:



A BOAT ON THE JORDAN



MODERN JERICHO



OUR CAMP AT JERICHO



THE SHEIK'S TENT



AQUEDUCT, JERICHO



[To face p. 140] CANAANITE WALLS, JERICHO,
RECENTLY EXCAVATED



JERICO

"Tea ready, bleeze"—these natives can never pronounce a *p* in a word—and the announcement is a welcome one to us after our first day in the saddle, for although it has not been a long day's ride it has proved quite long enough for those unused to riding; their bones have long since been aching, and they have so many times during the last two hours been asking: "How much farther is it?" They have been wondering, too, if this part of the journey has made them so stiff and aching, how will they fare before reaching Damascus?

But after the refreshment of tea and a wash we feel somewhat rested, and we walk round to inspect the horses, gather flowers, and watch the doings of the camp attendants, who are in good spirits; for the poor men are glad of securing a job, and though their work is arduous they are good-tempered, and—

"Ever with a welcome frolic take
The shadow and the sunshine."

At dinner, which is served in the large tent, we are regaled with soup, fish, roast joint and vegetables, fowl and salad, pastry and fruits *ad lib.*; and the anxious look and feeling of languor gradually disappear, and everybody says they "feel better now." It is astonishing the difference a good meal makes in our feelings, how we feel at peace with all mankind; and we find that whereas some of our company were not only looking tired, but were getting a wee bit cross, before dinner, afterwards the cheery smile returned and good fellowship was the order of the evening. At the close of the dinner the dragoman came in, and with the air of a commanding general said we were to rise at six, breakfast at seven, and start at eight. We therefore decide to retire to bed early, as there is little that can be done after dark, and so secure as much rest as possible to fit us for the journey of the morrow.

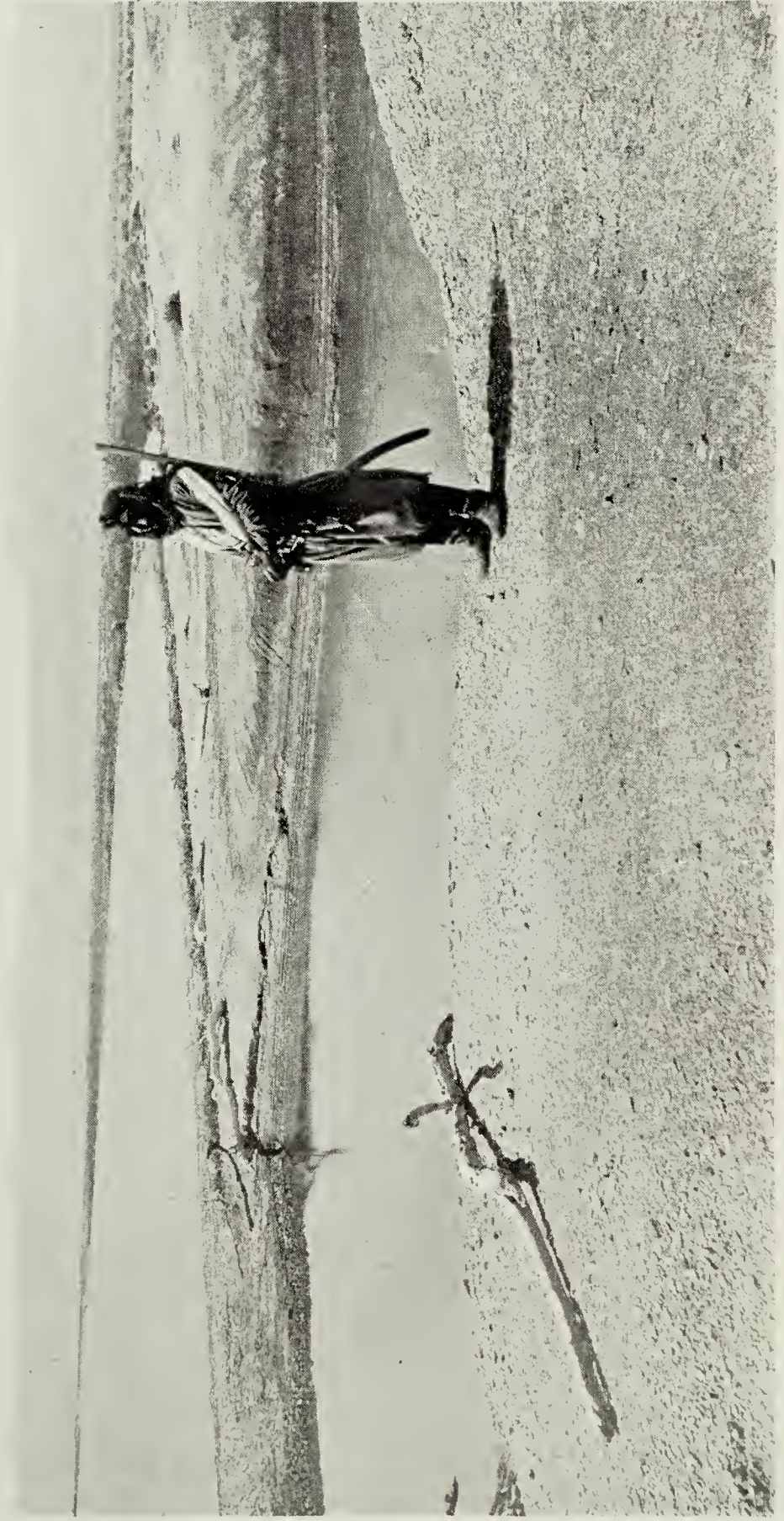
This we all resolve to do, but oh! fruitless resolve; to bed we certainly go, but our attendants and muleteers are not as tired as we are, and they sit around our tents and talk. To say they talk gives but little idea of what we

mean to those who have never heard Arabic spoken ; but to those who have, I have only to say they talk Arabic. There is nothing a native of Palestine likes so much as to talk, and they talk Arabic. Welsh is nothing to it ; French is nothing to it, although that is bad enough if one is trying to sleep on a night journey in a train. And when a camp arrives from Jerusalem and pitches near any village, the whole of the dwellers of that village turn out after the travellers have retired to bed to hear the news. They have no newspapers or books, and all the information they get has to be given by talking ; and so our muleteers are great men at night-time, and have to tell the news of all the happenings since last they were here ; and as some one in every village has brothers or cousins in Jerusalem they want to hear all about them.

Then, in the absence of further news, they have all their old stock jokes to tell over again for the hundredth time, but with the same gusto as if fresh ; and each one tries his best to outvie the others with laughter. But some time after midnight things quiet down, and, utterly worn out, we fall asleep.

And hardly had we got to sleep, or so it seemed to us, when, lo and behold ! we are awakened and told it is time to rise. We wish we could have another hour ; but no, the men are already slackening the ropes of our tents, and unless we dress quickly we may have them down upon us. While we are having our breakfast, the men are packing up the sleeping-tents and loading them on the beasts ; then, as soon as breakfast is finished, the dining-tent is struck, packed, and loaded ; also the plates and dishes, kitchen utensils, kitchener, chairs and tables, bedsteads, bedding, and carpets are all, with incredible swiftness, packed on the animals ; and off they go as quickly as possible, for it is a point of honour that the traveller shall find all quite ready when he arrives in the evening.

The hour devoted to lunch, and détours and halts we make, allow of this being done, as the camp attendants and equipment take no midday rest. A small luncheon-



THE DEAD SEA

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tent, however, accompanies the party for the convenience of the midday repast.

Now, having mounted our horses, we make for Shiloh, which we soon see on the hill away to the right. The situation of the place is minutely described in Judges xxi. 19: "A place that is on the north of Bethel, on the east of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah." The site of the place was forgotten and unknown for centuries; but modern explorers had no difficulty in fixing it from the clear directions given, and there is not a shadow of doubt that the ruins we find here mark the site of ancient Shiloh. There are no houses to be seen anywhere, and only two or three blocks of ruins, although it must have been a place of considerable importance in Old Testament times; and the traveller will peruse the Biblical references to it, both historical and prophetic, with the keenest interest. Here Joshua divided out the land among the tribes, and here the tabernacle was reared. Around the ruins of the ancient well the daughters of Shiloh danced in the yearly festival. Here dwelt Eli; and to this place Hannah came yearly to the sacrifice, bringing with her the little coat for the boy Samuel, who ministered before the Lord. And here occurred the sudden death of the old man Eli, as he heard of the death of his sons and loss of the ark. The utter desolation of the place as we see it to-day shows a singularly graphic fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah, who used it as a type of the destruction which should fall upon the house of the Lord in Jerusalem.

We now turn westward through the green valley towards Lubban, the ancient Lebonah. Here, in the bed of the valley far from the town up on yonder hill-side, lies the spring to which the women of Lebonah come for their water, and, as is usual, bring their clothes to wash.

Over the spring is an old khan, and no doubt this will now soon be improved into a wayside inn.

We follow the windings of the road around the hills, and presently emerge into the fairly level plain of Mukhnah.

On our left, on the slope of the hill, we see the large village of Howarah; farther on is Awerta, where we see some dome-topped ancient tombs. These are with good reason believed to be the tombs of Eleazar and Phinehas, the son and grandson of Aaron. Riding on through this noble plain, we notice wide fields of growing corn; and, stretching away on our left, we discern the eastern spurs of Mount Gerizim. Leaving the plain and turning to the left, we come to a village called Belata, the Samaritan name for the Holy Oak, tradition identifying this place with the oak of Moreh, under which Abraham pitched his tent, and built an altar—the first in the Land of Promise—for the worship of Jehovah. It was here that Jacob buried the teraphim of Rachel and the idolatrous amulets of his household, and, having purchased a plot of land here, he erected on it an altar which he dedicated to the God of Israel. Here Joshua set up a great stone by the sanctuary under the oak, as a witness to the words which he had spoken of the Lord.

Nearly close to the site of this, the earliest sanctuary reared for the worship of God in the land, is the well which Jacob caused to be dug, and which was still in the time of Christ, as, indeed, it is to this day, called Jacob's Well. It lies now within a walled enclosure, owned by the Greek Church, near by the road; and the situation accords perfectly with the narrative of Christ meeting with the woman at the well.

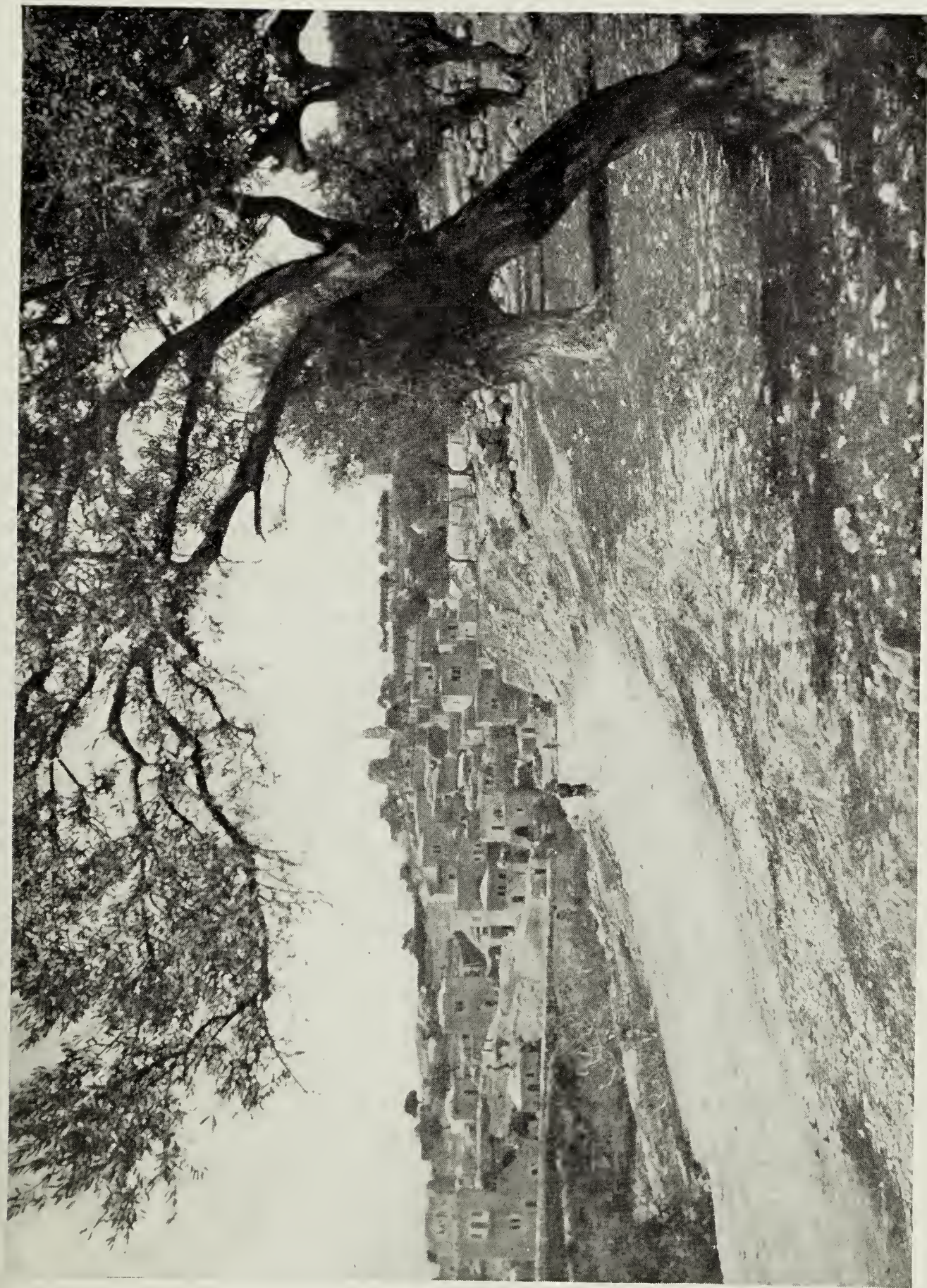
Although the well and surrounding ground is now enclosed, it was, when the writer first saw it, open and in a beautiful setting; but owing to some unaccountable influences at work on their behalf, this spot, which ought surely to be the property of all Christendom, is claimed as the property of one sect.

But how realistic does the narrative become as we read it here! "The well is deep"; Mount Gerizim, "this mountain," looms up just opposite; it is on "the parcel of ground Jacob gave to his son Joseph"; and in the rich valley running eastward are its fields of corn,



VILLAGE OF BETHANY

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BETHIANY FROM THE JERICHO ROAD

already white unto the harvest," and Sychar is a village near by.

But there are some who dispute the genuineness of this site—what site in Palestine is there some one does not dispute?—but for what reason I know not. It is one of the few Biblical sites about which Jews, Christians and Mahomedans generally agree, and this is usually considered a safe criterion. It seems so perfectly to suit all the circumstances of the narrative that all objections on the flimsy points raised must fall to the ground.

It is a pity so much rubbish has been written about it by arm-chair geographers who have never been here, or by others who, at most, have spent some half-hour on the spot, and had no opportunity of examining the place at all. By some it is averred that the well is dry. I have never seen it dry; indeed, I have frequently drank of the water and have myself drawn from the well when I lunched there, as I have rambled down to it time and again from Nablous. But even if it were dry, we must remember that it is partially filled up. On the occasion of my first visit there I looked at the hole in the ground, and the situation seemed to fit the account given in John's Gospel; but, in looking down the hole, I was surprised to see it was only a few feet deep, and that it did not look like a well at all, but like a square underground room. Many others who only saw that much about it have gone away and written about it. But I let myself down into this vault-looking place with difficulty, and found a great lot of stones lying around on the floor; the largest of these lay in the centre, and on removing this I found the entrance to the well. "Joseph," I asked of a native, "why do they put this stone over the mouth of the well, so that persons cannot see it?" "Because nearly every one throws a stone down," he replied, "and it is in consequence being rapidly filled up." That is, of course, partly the reason why it is not so deep as formerly; it is now only about seventy-five feet deep and seven and a half feet in diameter; but it was originally nearly double the depth. Why would a well be dug so

deep, if it were not to reach the springs? any practical man would ask; and the obvious reply must be that the well was dug deep for the same reason that hundreds of wells in our own country are dug deep, viz. to reach the water; that Jacob might, by having his own water supply for his flocks and cattle, be independent of his neighbours' springs.

Since it has been claimed and enclosed by the Greek Church excavations have been going on, and the square room to which I referred has been found to be the crypt of an ancient church. It was the discovery of this fact which gave the Greek Church the reason for claiming it. We have already seen that the crusaders built great churches everywhere we have been, from Lydda and Ramleh onwards; and the feeling we have is one of astonishment, as we find that not only in all the places we have already visited, but everywhere else—at Samaria, Nazareth, Sepphoris, Cana, and the shores of the Sea of Galilee, on the summit of Tabor, on the spurs of Hermon, and even in the remoter districts—they not only built, but built massively, churches, basilicas, monasteries, hospices, and forts; and when we remember that all this was done far away from the aids of civilisation, and within the two hundred years only of their occupation of the country, the wonder grows upon us, and we cannot but admire the zeal which prompted them to so much energy and enthusiasm in the cause of the Crucified One. The finding of a relic or foundation of crusading times has formed an excuse for one or other of the Churches of the East to lay claim to the site, and this is the reason so many places are held by either the Catholic or Greek Churches; and where they have not been able to obtain the original site, because it has been converted into a mosque, as at the tomb of David, another spot has been given as a solatium.

The excavations here have revealed the columns which supported the roof of the nave and the extent of the foundations. It is to be regretted that they have resolved to build another church on the spot, for if there be a place in Palestine which, one would think, should be left under



FOUNTAIN OF ELISHA



ARABS MIGRATING

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the open canopy of heaven and untrammelled by a sectarian building, it should be Jacob's well. On going down the steps and entering the crypt, we find the stone, with its aperture worn by ropes, covering the entrance to the well is still left as found *in situ*; this was apparently raised some foot and a half from the surface of the ground. It is likely that this is the very stone on which the Saviour sat, for we read that, "being weary with His journey, He sat on the well"—perhaps thirsty, as well as weary—and waiting for some one to approach with a cord to draw water that He might quench His thirst.

By the way, has not the character of this poor woman who came while Christ was sitting on the well been terribly traduced? By almost common consent she has been branded as an immoral woman, because the disciples " marvelled that He talked with her." We must remember the ill-feeling that existed between the Jews and the Samaritans, and consider also the position of women in the East, before we impute such sweeping censure on the woman.

We know that Christ everywhere knew no caste, no distinction; that the Jew and Samaritan, male and female, were one to Him; and we learn also from the ancient Samaritan MSS. that they placed it on record that "this Jesus had no enmity against the Samaritans, and the Samaritans never molested Him."

The woman was probably a poor one, who was employed to draw water, either to take to the village, just as many women are still so employed in every village in Palestine, or whose duty it was at certain hours, like Rebecca, to draw water for the flocks. Anyway, she had the means for getting the water from the depths of the well, and it cannot be supposed that every household had this convenience. The well was evidently common property at the time, for the woman speaks of "our father Jacob, who gave us the well." Nor does the saying of Christ, reminding her that she had had five husbands, "and he whom thou now hast is not thine husband," prove anything against her character

to any one acquainted with the customs of marriage and betrothal in the East; and as for the disciples marvelling that He talked with the woman, it was not necessarily because she was a bad woman, or a woman at all, but because "the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans." In any case the woman had a receptive mind, and became one of Christ's first ministers—one of His first captains of the salvation army; one of the first to testify to His Messiahship, and the means of forming one of the first company of believers.

A short distance away in the plain is the tomb of Joseph, where he was buried according to his desire, after being brought up from Egypt, on the parcel of ground given him by Jacob his father for an inheritance; and no doubt beneath the plain plaster cenotaph in the interior his mummied remains still rest, as well preserved as the Pharaoh whom he so well served.

And here let him rest, for there can be no more mean robbery than to rob a man of his grave. The tomb, the walls of which were first repaired by Mr. Thomson, the English consul in Damascus, and subsequently surmounted with a domed-shaped roof, has now been converted into a "wely," or tomb of a saint—a Moslem holy place and prayer shrine, and thereby secure from sacrilege.

A little beyond the tomb is the village of Askar, as it is now called, the ancient Sychar, from whence the woman who talked with Jesus probably came, and where she lived. The road now leads towards the west, and, passing a Turkish barracks, with Gerizim on our left and Ebal on our right, we soon come in sight of Nablous, the largest city in Palestine except Jerusalem, containing 20,000 inhabitants. It is beautifully situated in the bed of the valley, and when looked at from the surrounding hills, with its domes and minarets, white houses and rich vegetation, and surrounded by clustering olive groves, it leaves an impression on the mind delightfully pleasing. It is a well-watered place, many copious streams coming down the mountain-sides, which makes the valley one of the most



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THE BROOK CHERITH



JERUSALEM FROM MOUNT SCOPUS



SITTING UNDER THE SHADOW OF A GREAT ROCK



CAMP AT JERUSALEM

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luxuriantly fertile anywhere to be found in the land. One large stream from Gerizim falls nearly in the centre of the town, and, dividing here, one branch flows away to unite with the Jordan, the other flowing in an opposite direction, fertilising the district through which it passes, and losing itself in the Mediterranean Sea.

There are several soap factories here, for the rich olive groves supply abundant berries from which the necessary oil is obtained for the manufacture of the soap; but many tourists cynically observe that the soap made here must be mainly for export, very little of it, apparently, being used locally.

The natives of Nablous are credited with other undesirable qualities than want of cleanliness, for they are reputed to be insolent and rude, if nothing worse. Probably this is an aspect of their character of bygone times; but there must now be an improvement, perhaps as the result of missionary effort or closer contact with civilising influences, for there are several missionary organisations working there, and also a post- and telegraph-office.

I have paid many visits to Nablous, sometimes staying there several days at a time, and I must record that I have never experienced any discomfort or inconvenience from rude behaviour. On the contrary, although I have often walked in the streets of the town or to Jacob's well, as well as to the summit of Gerizim, quite alone, I have always been treated with civility and courtesy. As an instance of this, I may mention that on my third visit there I was travelling in camp with a conducted party. We had arrived at our tents in mid-afternoon, and, as was usual, first of all refreshed ourselves with tea.

Our conductor—a German—who had never himself been to Palestine before, had somehow got to learn of the bad reputation of the place, and during tea he most emphatically warned us that it would be quite unsafe for us to stir outside the tents, or we should be murdered. The native dragoman we had with us, who was always willing to approve in whatever was easiest to himself, remained silent,

and the silence was taken by those of the party to mean consent.

But after tea they were rather startled by my asking if any one would like to take a walk with me into the town and on the mountain-side. The German protested it would be quite unsafe, and if we started he would not be responsible for the consequences. The gentlemen said they would much like to go out and see the place, but that we had better go by the conductor's advice, as, of course, he had his reasons for giving it. "Very well," I replied, "then I will go alone; I haven't come to Palestine to remain in tents." The ladies then said, "We also go with you," and, notwithstanding the suggestion of the gentlemen that we were acting very imprudently, off we started. We went first of all into the town and looked at the shops; then we visited the Samaritans and their synagogue, were shown a copy of the old Pentateuch roll, and had some conversation with the high priest and his sons. I had previously lodged in the house of the Sheik of the Samaritans, and I was only renewing old acquaintances. We were invited into a native dwelling, and kindly served with refreshments, lemonade, etc. After this we went for a ramble up the slopes of Gerizim to the waterfalls of the stream, and gathered bouquets of the beautiful ranunculus growing on its banks. We had been gone a rather long time, for it was a lovely afternoon; and owing to the alarmist attitude of the conductor the gentlemen had become anxious on our behalf, fearing that we had got into difficulty, if not danger. A few natives had accompanied us in the most friendly manner, showing us not merely courtesy, but kindness, and when we were nearing our tents they left us with a respectful *Ma Salaami* ("Go in peace"). The ladies went laughing into the tents, saying they had spent one of the most delightful afternoons of their lives, and had experienced nothing but friendliness everywhere. The gentlemen then said: "Wish we had gone with you"; and one of these, an American minister, was especially sorry, as he said it was one of the places he had come all



SITTING UNDER OWN VINE AND FIG TREE



“ BACKSHEESH ”

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INN OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN



CASTLES OF THIRAX AND TAUROS



GOOD SAMARITAN INN FROM ABOVE



APOSTLE'S FOUNTAIN



BACKACHE STONE

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the way from America to see. I have merely mentioned this episode to show that I fear that in the case of the natives of Nablous they illustrate the proverb: "Give a dog a bad name," etc. I simply speak as I have found them. There is a Latin hospice here where visitors are received and provided with supper, bed and breakfast, and till the opening of the hotel this hospitality was no mean boon. I have myself stayed there three times, and much appreciated the kindness received.

But there is a comfortable hotel there now, where travellers without tents can be sure of good attention and food, but at rather high charges.

Nablous has played such an important part in the world's history since Abraham first pitched his tent near by that it would be wearying to recapitulate in detail any retrospect of the important events in its career. How that Jacob came here, following the steps of his grandfather, purchased his camping-ground from the sons of Hamor, and constructed what has proved his most lasting monument, the well which bears his name.

Here the body of Joseph was brought up from Egypt with great ceremony, and was buried in his own inheritance. Here Joshua came with his redoubtable warriors, and won the second of his three great campaigns. And here he caused the Israelites to assemble on that memorable occasion when he read to them the law, and the people cried with a loud voice, "Amen!" It was here the formal consecration of the land to Jehovah took place—in the very centre of the country. Abimelech tried to set up his throne here, and failed. Rehoboam came here to be crowned, and his folly led to the great division between Judah and the ten tribes. Here, too, came Rehoboam's greatest descendant and sat on the well, while He preached the most remarkable sermon to the smallest congregation on record, but with far-reaching results.

And here has remained for 3000 years that proud but dwindling Samaritan community which, owing to Ezra's high-handed policy, separated from the Jews of Jerusalem,

and built a rival sanctuary on Mount Gerizim, where they still, at the time of the Passover, observe the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, although the Jews themselves have long since discontinued the ritual. It is interesting to reflect that, while empires and dynasties have risen and passed away, these people living separate from all other races of the earth still hold their own, and retain all the marked peculiarities of their race. They live in the south-west part of the town, and a visit to them, if not edifying, is at least interesting. We have observed that they are a dwindling community, and no doubt that this is partly attributable to their strict rule of only marrying in their own sect.

Their great trouble at the present time is that nearly all the children are born boys; there is said to be an average of nine males to one female, and consequently there is a great dearth of wives among them. Hearing a rumour that there were a number of Samaritans living in Africa, of the pure and unmixed race, where the women outnumbered the men, they took heart and invited a number of these to come to Nablous. But when they arrived they were disappointed in them, as they were darker in the skin than their own women, and they sent them back again—not suitable. It is to be regretted that they could not remember that the difference in the climate of Africa would cause a darkening of the skin, and that if they had overcome that objection and introduced fresh blood in the race, they might have added strength to it and saved it from impending annihilation. But so jealous are they of their purity of descent from the ten tribes that they would take no risks. And yet, though boasting of their pure descent, they are without doubt in their origin of mixed parentage, for the account given of them in the Old Testament clearly shows that their ancestors during the Babylonian captivity intermarried with the Semitic settlers sent by the Assyrian king, and hence they were disowned of the Jews because of their tainted blood.

Their synagogue is a small, plain, whitewashed build-

ing—so small and shabby that, when we consider it is their cathedral—their Mecca—and the headquarters of their religion, it causes some surprise. Their high priest professes to claim direct descent from Aaron, the brother of Moses, and if he can do this, surely he has a champion pedigree—but he says he has a genealogical parchment to prove his claim. He has a large family, and, his income being derived from the tithes of his people, who have little to pay, for the Samaritans are wretchedly poor, his sons are not above trying to eke out a living for the family by selling photographs, postcards of themselves, and souvenirs. They also sink their pride on occasion to solicit donations, and in other ways try to get a little to help them to subsist.

Here in the synagogue is kept with the most jealous care one of the most ancient MSS. in existence, the old Pentateuch roll, on which is inscribed the Five Books of Moses, which is all the Scriptures they acknowledge, and which they claim was written by Abishua the son of Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, some 3570 years ago. It is doubted by some experts who have examined it whether it is really older than the Christian era; by others it is thought to be of the time of Ezra; but in any case it is undoubtedly a very ancient and precious copy. They do not, it must be said, at any time now show the oldest roll to visitors; it is only brought out once a year, and exhibited before the congregation. The roll they show to visitors for a gratuity is a copy, the original being kept in a safe to which a composite lock is attached, requiring five different keys, which are kept by five different persons, to open it, and, of course, the consent of each of these five persons is required to produce for inspection the original document. One reason of the jealous care with which they guard this their most priceless possession is that when showing it, as a special favour, to a party of Americans some years ago, one of them—a minister, of all persons!—when the priest had turned his head for a moment, tore off a small piece, intending to keep it as a souvenir. Fortunately it was

discovered in time to recover the piece, and it has been restored to the roll.

The minister was severely reprimanded for his act of vandalism, and promised not to repeat the practice; but only a few days later this same man was caught knocking off with a small hammer he took about with him for the purpose a piece of mosaic from the mosque of Omar. The craving for souvenirs by Americans is almost overpowering, and many defacements of ancient monuments are due to this disgraceful practice. Perhaps the most harmless, and at the same time most curious, instance of satisfying this craze that has come under the writer's notice was when an American lady was seen filling a large bag with sand at the foot of the Pyramids. "Whatever are you doing that for?" she was asked. "Well," she said, "I promised my friends I would bring them a souvenir, and I guess I shan't get anything cheaper than this."

The photograph of the Pentateuch roll given in these pages is from the original manuscript. I found, too, that they had a number of old MSS., and among them one which is a chronicle of the chief events happening during the lives of their high priests for the last 3000 years. The intense interest, to my mind, attaching to this document consists in the fact that an account of the birth, life and death of Christ is given among the important events happening during the life of one of these high priests. A photograph of a portion of this document I append herewith, showing a note in the margin attesting that it is a correct copy of an older one made in the 544th year of the Hejira (corresponding to the year 1166 of our era). I also give below a correct translation of the whole of that part of the document relating to Christ, and it will be noted that the account closely accords with those given in the Gospels, but from a Samaritan point of view. It runs thus—

About the Birth of Jesus, the Son of Joseph the Carpenter.

And in those days also occurred the birth of Jesus, the son of Joseph the carpenter, of the sect of the Jews, hence

the date from our ancestor Adam (to whom be peace) to the appearance of the son of Mary 4290 years, and from the commencement of Fanoota to the birth of the said Jesus the son of Mary 1256 years, and his birth took place in Bethlehem, and his resort was to Nazareth, and many of the sect of the Jews gathered to him, until his chief men were from among them, and the Jews hated him with a bitter hatred, and sought in every way to slay him, because they claimed that his works were contrary to the law of their religion, and opposed to the tradition of their elders in every matter. And when he had gathered apostles he delegated them to various countries; among these Peter was sent to Rome, and Andrew to the Soudan, Mathew accompanying him; this Mathew wrote a gospel in the year 41 after the death of Jesus, and it is said he wrote it in Judæa. Thomas was sent to Babylon, and Philip to Africa and Eliya and its neighbourhood. One Paul wrote a number of epistles which the Christians have, and he at the first was called Saul, and it is said that he was born in Tarsus, capital of Silicia, and that he belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, but more truly he belonged to the tribe of Judah; he wrote 14 epistles. Before he wrote these he sent an epistle to Salonica in the year 52 after the slaying of Jesus the son of Mary, the last was the Second Epistle to Timothy in the 56th year after the slaying of Jesus. And Simon was sent to the country of Barbary. And the said Jesus had other disciples than these, among whom was Mark, who also wrote a gospel, and of whom it was said he was a disciple of Peter. It is said that he wrote his gospel at the dictation of Peter to the people of Rome.

It is said that he wrote his gospel 46 years after the death of his master.

Among the others there was Luke, who was from the city of Antioch, and Sabius, practising medicine, and it is said that he was originally a heathen. After he became a Christian it is said he became a disciple of Paul, it was said he wrote his gospel in Bœotia which is a state in

Greece and its king was Tahio Cade. Among the others was John, who was from Bethsaida, a town of Galilee; he was a son of Zebedee and Salome, he was in his youth a fisherman, and Jesus ordained him as an apostle, he also wrote a gospel in the year 101 after the slaying of Jesus, but more correctly 97 after the death of Jesus: because he reached the age of over 115, and it is said he wrote part of his gospel in the Island of Patmos, and part after his return from there in Ephesus, and he continued at the writing of his gospel from the year 64 to 97, after the slaying of Jesus. To return to the subject of Jesus the son of Mary, whom the sect of the Jews, and his relatives accounted an illegitimate son of Joseph the carpenter, Herod the king sought to slay him, and he fled from his hands, and was a fugitive in hiding from him and from his relatives the Jews. At this time the high priest Yhkem died in the mercy of God, and was succeeded by the high priest Jonathan who held the office for 27 years. In his day Jesus the son of Mary was crucified by the emperor Tiberius; with him were crucified two sinners who according to the law of the Jews were worthy of death. One of them was crucified on his right and the other on his left, and this was in the Jebusite city of Aelia, through the instrumentality of Jonata, the high priest of the sect of the Jews. This Jesus never molested the Samaritans all the days of his life, neither were the Samaritans concerned with him or molested him, but he was a plague to his relatives and his co-religionists from whom he sprang, these are the sect of the Jews who hated him with a bitter hatred.

The Jews were also the cause of the death of John, a disciple of the same Jesus, and they deceived Herod through the means of a young maiden whom they presented for his pleasure, and when she found out that the said Herod was dead in love with her and her beauty, and was inclined to her, it was not difficult for her, and he beheaded the said John. Said John was at Sebaste at the time. The reason for naming him John the Baptist was





SHUKREH HISHMEH, SYRIAN
DRAGOMAN



FOUNTAIN AT BIREH



BETHEL

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that the Jews originally believed in his being righteous, and believed in him, but stopped doing so when they saw that he was a lover of Jesus the son of Mary, because they asked John not to baptize Jesus, but he took him to Jericho and baptized him there, for the Jews believed that any one who was baptized in these waters were cleansed from all their uncleanness and sins. Since that time baptism was changed and taken up by the Christians and refused by the Jews, and the Jews instituted in its place to pass through the waters of the Jordan, believing that whosoever did so should be cleansed from their sins, but when the Christian kings came into power they forbade them from doing that.

We have given a free translation of this portion of the document in order to show, by its garbled account of the doings of the Jews, it could not have had a Jewish origin; and although we attach no very great importance to it as an historical work, being frankly based on hearsay evidence, yet, assuming it to be a genuine record of the current talk of those times—about which there is no reason to doubt—it is of overwhelming interest, as being one of the earliest confirmatory documents in existence of the Gospel accounts, and also incidentally as confirmatory of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel.

CHAPTER XI

TO SAMARIA, NAZARETH AND SEA OF GALILEE

LEAVING Nablous we descend the valley at the foot of Mount Ebal for some distance along the road which leads to Jaffa, passing by gardens and orchards of olive, fig and almond trees, which flourish here luxuriantly, being watered by bubbling streams which come rushing down on either side of the road; the roadside and banks of the streams are garlanded with flowers of every hue, and the beauty of the landscape delights the eye on every side. Surely Ephraim had a goodly possession, and well may the scenery be extolled by the sacred writers. It is indeed "the pride of Ephraim, the flower of his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley." Passing on the left a picturesque aqueduct, which used to convey water to a mill now in ruins, we leave the road and turn up the hills by a bridle-path toward the city of Samaria, which we reach in about two hours after leaving Nablous.

Presently we come to an aqueduct of Roman times, from which the water drips, making the ground wet all around, and through one of the arches of this aqueduct we descry the hill of Samaria, and we are led to exclaim: "What a fine site for a city!" Situated on high ground, and in an almost impregnable position, and surrounded on all sides by fertile lands and rushing streams, it is no wonder it was selected for a royal city and became a place of great importance. The founder of the city was Omri, who abandoned his former royal city, after his palace had been burned down, for this, which offered a more strategical position. He appears to have been an honest man, for he secured the hill by fair purchase from Shemer,



FOUNTAIN AT BETHEL



WOMAN WASHING



THE CAMP KITCHEN



WÂDY-EL-HARAMEIEH



WELL AT LEBONAH



VILLAGERS OF PALESTINE

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and built here his new capital. Ahab, his son, lived here, and here his heathen wife, the infamous Jezebel, a Sidonian princess, reared altars to Baal, and groves to Astarte. Notwithstanding its fine position, it had to endure many a siege, and the famine was so great during one of these, that mothers slew their own children and boiled them for food. It was near the gate that stood at the end of the street where the row of columns now stands, that the lepers in desperation made a raid on the Syrian camp in the hope of stealing food, when they found that the army had fled in fright; and so was fulfilled the word of the prophet uttered the day before, that a measure of fine flour should be sold for two talents, and two measures of barley for two talents.

In the time of the Romans the Emperor Augustus presented the place to Herod the Great, who caused it to be handsomely rebuilt, and erected for himself sumptuous palaces, the columns of which remain. The village we find here to-day is a poor one; near by is the ruined crusading church of St. John, which has lately been converted into a mosque. The houses are mostly built of mud, with, however, delicately carved stone capitals, and shafts found among the ruins of Samaria's former splendour serving for door-posts and lintels; and fragments of choice carving from some palace here and there are built about in the walls. The ancient Samaria stood some distance beyond; its position being marked by a huge *tell*, or mound, one of the largest in Palestine. This *tell* is at the present time being excavated under the auspices of the American Archæological Society, in connection with the Harvard University, and the work has already been rewarded by striking and important discoveries.

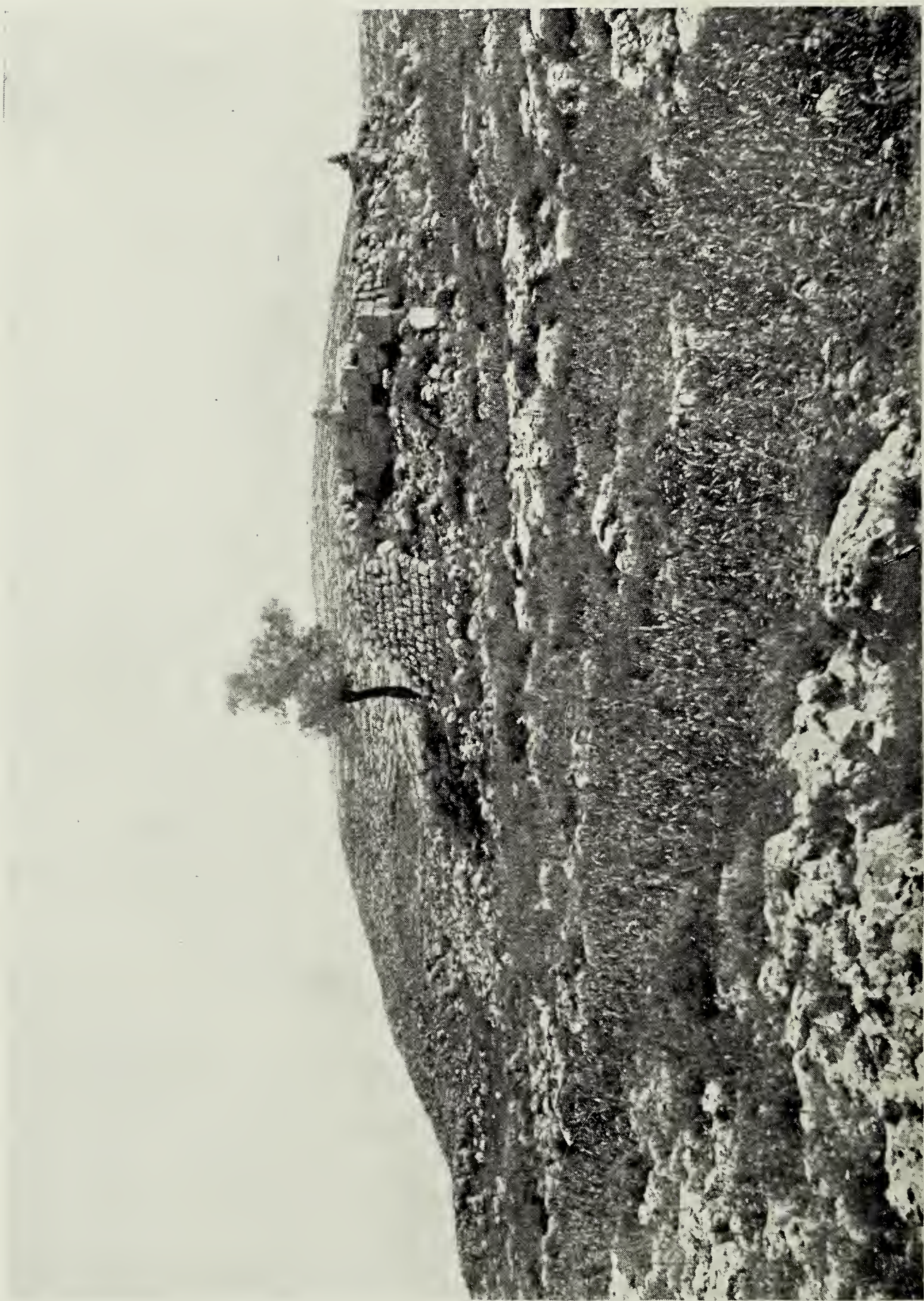
As the mound is such a large one, and there is such a maze of remains—Roman, Greek and Hebrew—to sort out, it is not expected that the final results can be published for some time; but it is understood that Dr. Reisner and Mr. Fisher are busy preparing the account of their

discoveries up to date for early publication. Until this work is published they naturally wish to reserve the more important results of their labours; but from what has already leaked out it is evident that we may anticipate a rich store of archæological report.

The walls and foundations of Roman buildings have been unearthed, Herodian coins found, and Greek statues in fine white marble, of exquisite workmanship, brought to light. The special object of the explorers, however, is to discover the earlier, or Israelite, remains, and having cleared away the débris of the Roman period, and getting nearer the base of the mound, this special object of their search is being amply rewarded. A number of potsherds and baked clay tablets, very similar to the celebrated Tel-el-Amarna tablets, have been discovered, the writing on which is in the ancient Hebrew script, the same as that found in the Siloam inscription; and this is computed to be of the eighth or ninth century B.C. On some of these ostraca have been found several of the names given in the Old Testament, among them those of Elisha, Uzza, Abiezer, Sheba and Nathan. They have also unearthed the foundations of massive buildings believed to be the palace built by Omri, and afterwards enlarged and beautified by Ahab. The foundations are certainly those of a Hebrew palace, the first and only palace of a Jewish king ever found, and therefore of unique interest to Bible students, and such that will lead us to look forward with the keenest relish for the publication of the final results of their work.

It must be also a source of satisfaction in these days of sharp Biblical criticism, that during all the discoveries that have been made in recent years, nothing has been found to overthrow the accuracy of the main Biblical accounts given, but, on the contrary, very much that corroborates and confirms the historical status of that book.

What a magnificent place the city must have been in the times of Ahab and Herod! yet it is now but a heap of ruins, and the prophecies of Hosea and Micah—





ANCIENT AMORITE POTTERY



DOTHAN



WOMEN OF JEZREEL



FOUNTAIN OF JEZREEL



SHUNEM



FOUNTAIN OF GIDEON

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“Samaria shall become desolate” and “I will make Samaria as a heap in the midst of the field”—have been literally fulfilled.

We find on the farther side of the hill a long row of columns, 1000 yards in extent, which in ancient times embellished one side of a splendid road leading to the city; and some hundred other columns can be seen lying about, or sticking out from the ground, in the surrounding fields.

The first Christian church outside Jerusalem was founded here by Philip; and Peter and John visited the infant community and ministered to it. The ruined church, now converted into a mosque, was built by the crusaders in the twelfth century to replace a former basilica of much earlier origin, said to have been built by the indefatigable Helena, and which was dedicated to John the Baptist, whose body, tradition avers, is buried here. It is also said to be the resting-place of Obadiah, and their reputed tombs are pointed out by the custodian inside the building.

We now descend the hill toward the north, where are to be seen traces of Herod’s vast amphitheatre; after crossing the bed of the valley we ascend the slope of the opposite hill, and on reaching the summit we pause to look back and take a last retrospect of Samaria, “unique in beauty and dignity of position,” and cannot but marvel as we recall its departed splendour, and realise as we never could do without having visited the place, how imagination pales before the reality of what it was like when in its prime, so different from our conceptions and so entirely different from the village of mud-built hovels of to-day.

We next pass by several villages with olive groves and gardens, in one of which it is refreshing to see apple trees growing. Our next point of interest is Dothan, which is a good place at which to halt for lunch, as there is good water obtainable. It is reached by making a slight *détour* from the road, away to the right; it lies in a well-

watered valley, and many others, since the time of the sons of Jacob, must have said: "Let us go to Dothan," for when the herbage has been dried up by the summer heat on the hills, the grass is still abundant at Dothan, and we have never visited the place without finding flocks of sheep and cattle in the vicinity. A large pit, now usually full of water, is known as the pit of Joseph, but if this be the pit into which he was let down by his brethren, it must have been dry at the time, for we read, "there was no water in it." I have been told, however, that there are other pits in the neighbourhood which are dry. In any case there is no doubt about the locality, and there is a large *tell* near by called Tell Dothan, where no doubt excavations would reveal some interesting "finds."

A couple of hours further brings us to Jenin, a pretty village situated at the entrance to the plain of Esdraelon.

It no doubt corresponds to the Engannin, or "garden spring" of Scripture. A bountiful stream of water is conducted in a channel through the village, and one is glad to find so pleasant a place at which to camp and rest. A comfortable hotel has been erected here for the convenience of travellers without camping-tents, and is a great boon for such, as Jenin is a kind of half-way halting-place between Nablous and Nazareth; and until this hotel was built the only accommodation provided by two native houses was filthy in the extreme.

Our road now lies across the plain of Esdraelon, that great battle-field of the world, on which, from the time of Thothmes III to Napoleon I many fierce battles have been fought and fates decided. The plain is fairly level, almost the first level ground we have had, and our horses are glad to indulge in a canter. Away to the east rise the mountains of Gilboa, to the left the range of Carmel is seen, and seventeen miles in front nestling in the hills across the plain Nazareth can be descried.

We make straight for Zerin, the ancient Jezreel, which stands in a prominent position on the centre of the plain. It is now only a wretchedly poor village, but commands a



JACOB'S WELL BEFORE THE EXCAVATIONS

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JACOB'S WELL DURING EXCAVATIONS

fine view. On the vine-clad hill near by lay the vineyard of Naboth; and Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab, was killed by being thrown from her palace window, which was here, and the dogs ate her flesh, as foretold by the prophet Elijah.

We now turn down towards the valley on the right, in which we find a large pool of water gushing from a cave at the foot of the hill of Gilboa. This is the fountain where Gideon's host refreshed themselves, and where he selected his three hundred chosen men to go up against the Midianites and the Amalekites, with the cry: "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

Somewhere in the hill just above, Saul came to an untimely end after his defeat near by; being grievously wounded he fell on his own sword and died.

A mile or so farther north we come to Shunem, which was the centre of the Philistine army that came up against Saul, and which is celebrated as being the scene of that touching story of the Shunammite woman and her little son.

How real it all appears! here on these very fields the little lad came out to see his father in the hot sun, and cried: "Oh! my head, my head!" Over there, across the plain on the left, lies Mount Carmel, to which the bereaved mother rode in haste to find the prophet of Israel, after the death of her son. Shunem is now a small village of mud-built houses with flat roofs, and close by the village is a pleasant garden with a palm and other fruit trees, enclosed by a thick hedge of giant cactus or prickly pear.

We ride through the centre of this village, and then round the base of a hill known as the Little Hermon, over the slopes of which we saw a herd of wild gazelles flee at our approach; then we come to another small Mussulman village with mean dwellings, but like so many of these small and insignificant-looking villages of Palestine, it possesses an interest out of all proportion to its present appearance and size, for this is Nain, at the gate of which Christ raised the widow's son from the bier as they were carrying him to his funeral. There is a small

Greek church here, beneath whose shadow we sit for lunch, or under the fig trees near by.

Although this church has been built for more than twenty years, it is said there is not yet a single convert, and indeed—strange anomaly—even the caretaker is a Moslem, for they can get no other.

There is a spring of water in a cave near by, picturesquely facing the hills of Nazareth and Mount Tabor, which from this point looks like a mammoth mound rising isolated from the plain. Endor lies round the foot of the hill less than an hour away, but there is nothing to see worth the digression.

We pass by the village well and cross the plain toward the hills, which we ascend by a steep and rough road, and soon we find the place beautifully and snugly embowered in a valley among the hills.

Perhaps, as we come in sight of the village of Joseph and Mary and the place which contained the home of the childhood of Jesus, we ought—in view of its precious and sacred memories—to find our hearts filled with tender and emotional feelings; but after a hard day's riding we discover that we are more anxious to espy the location of our tents, and our first concern seems to be for the cheering cup of tea. And here we realise the peculiar advantage of travelling leisurely through the land, for under the weariness and pressure of rushing through the country, as some tourists do, half the pleasure, sentiment, and hallowed feelings which one expects to experience in gazing upon the scenes of sacred story, are strangely absent, and it is no wonder that when seen under such circumstances so many go home from their holiday and speak of the disappointment of their impressions in the Holy Land. But let them go as we have gone; let them rest a while and get over their tired feeling of the day's journey, and then instead of rushing on again, stay on for another day or two, so that, rising refreshed, they will be able to enjoy the things they see. Then instead of being disappointed they will be glad they have come,

and carry away with them memories never to be forgotten. Another advantage of travelling, so that we may stay here and there in the most interesting places, will be, that besides being the better able to view and enjoy the scenes we visit, we get a better opportunity of learning the interesting customs of the country, and the many old traditions and rich folk-lore of the people, which teem with an interest second only to the Biblical associations of the land.

May we give one or two of these as samples, which, so far as I am aware, have never appeared in print before? The natives have a tradition that—

Adam and Eve, although they had several sons, had only one daughter; who, of course, grew up to be the most beautiful young woman in all the world, and, as was only natural, in course of time a suitor appeared upon the scene—the tradition does not state where he came from—and he asked Adam if he might have his daughter. Adam, like a wise man solicitous for his daughter's welfare, said, "Yes, if you will provide a suitable home for her," and the young man went away to prepare the home. But he was such a long time gone they gave him up for lost, or dead; and then a second suitor appeared and asked Adam if he might have his daughter, and Adam replied to him as he had done the other, and he went to prepare the suitable home. He, too, was such a long time gone, that they gave him up for dead; and then a third suitor arrived and asked Adam for his daughter. Adam told him, "Yes," if he "would prepare a suitable home." "I have that already," said the young man. Then said Adam: "Behold, she is before thee, take her and go." But alas! no sooner had they gone than the first suitor turned up and said, that having the home ready, he had come to claim his bride. This put poor Adam into a terrible fix, and he did not know what to do. So in order to gain time to think, he told the young man to come again *Buchrah* (to-morrow morning). Then in his

perplexity he consulted his wife, told her of his deep trouble—that he had never deceived any one, or gone behind his word before in his life. And Eve, being a woman of considerable resource, advised him to pray to the Lord to turn the dog into a daughter; so Adam prayed, and in the morning the dog was turned into a daughter just like the other, and Adam was got out of his difficulty. Then hardly had they got away before the second suitor came and said he had the home ready, and had come for his betrothed, and Adam was in sore trouble again. But Eve advised him this time to ask the Lord to turn the donkey into a daughter, and lo! it was so, the next morning the donkey was turned into a daughter just like the other, and the young man joyfully took her away. So that although Adam had only one daughter, he had three sons-in-law, and in course of time he thought he would go round and see how his sons-in-law were getting along.

Calling upon one of them, he, after a little general conversation, asked: "And how are you getting along with your wife?" "Oh," said the young man, "she is all right sometimes, but sometimes she gets so passionate and barks at me like a dog." Adam said nothing, but he thought, "Ah, that is the dog daughter."

Then he called on another, and asked him how he got on with his wife. "Oh," he replied, "she is all right sometimes, but sometimes she gets as stubborn and sulky as an old donkey," and Adam didn't say anything, but he thought: "That is the donkey daughter." Then he went to the third, and in like manner asked how he got on with his wife. "Oh," said the young man joyfully, "she is a mare" (a mare is the highest ideal of perfection an Arab knows), and Adam thought: "Yes, that is the real daughter." Well, many of the natives believe this story, which has been handed down from father to son for generations, and it is by this they account for the different dispositions there are in women, and if they see a woman in the market-place or street getting into a passion and quarrelling over her bargaining, they will nudge their



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NABLOUS AND MOUNT EBAL



A WOMAN OF SAMARIA

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TOMB OF JOSEPH, SHECHEM



NABLOUS AND MOUNT GERIZIM

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HILL OF SAMARIA



RUINS OF SAMARIA

[To face p. 170]

neighbour's elbow and say in an undertone: *Bint Kaub* ("dog daughter"); and if they hear of one who is sulky and stubborn, they will whisper to each other: *Bint Hamar* ("donkey daughter"). And if they hear of one who is all perfection, they will know that she is descended from the real daughter. And so the great anxiety of every man is to get married to one who had as her ancestress the real daughter, with none of the mongrel animal in her blood.

And they have their jokes about differing beliefs from their own. Thus, Mussulman natives are never tired of telling over their tale intended as a lampoon on the Catholic missionaries—

A poor widow woman, they say, was left with, as her sole possession, a solitary hen; but the hen was such a good one, it laid an egg every day. And the egg was the only source of sustenance the poor woman had, and she exchanged the egg every day for rice, and thanked God every day for His goodness, and was happy. But one day a priest dressed in black cassock and gown called on the widow, told her that her religion was a false one, that his was the only genuine and true one, and he urged her to become a convert. The woman was peaceably inclined, and as she desisted from entering into any argument with him, it made the priest hopeful that he was obtaining an adherent to his cause; and he asked her to kneel beside him while he prayed that she should be saved from the burning flames. He then left the house to go home; but as he was leaving he espied the hen. "Ah!" he thought, "she is a nice plump fowl, she will make me a good supper." And without further ado he caught her up, tucked her beneath the folds of his gown, and chuckled at the anticipation of his meal, feeling that his visit even to a poor widow was not without its reward. When he had left the house, the widow went to look for the hen, her sole companion and source of food; and it could nowhere be found. She told her neighbours of her loss, and

of the visit of the priest; they told her that in their opinion he had stolen it, and they advised her to pray God that His vengeance might fall on the wicked priest. But the woman said: "No, I will not ask for vengeance, only that he may be forgiven, and I will trust my God and He will provide." But when the priest got home and pulled the fowl from his cloak, he was surprised to see, instead of the plump and beautifully feathered fowl, that it had not a feather left, and instead of being plump was a wretched-looking thing—only a bag of bones. Thereupon his conscience twitted him, and he stealthily took it back, when, lo! all its feathers returned as he deposited it near the house, and the widow on finding it, called her neighbours together and said: "Rejoice with me, for I have found my fowl, and God is good, He will not let me starve."

One more tale must suffice for our purpose, as an example of the tales told in Palestine; and this is a specimen of the kind conveying a moral—

An Arab merchant one day stopped with his camels to rest beside a wall which enclosed an orchard, and one of his camels reaching its neck over the wall, tore a branch from one of the trees; the owner of the orchard seeing the damage done to one of his most valuable trees, in a fit of anger picked up a stone and threw it at the camel with such deadly aim that the animal fell dead. The owner of the camel seeing what was done, then in a fit of exasperation at his loss, threw a stone at the owner of the orchard with fatal results. When the camel-driver saw the man was dead, he fled with all haste; but the relatives of the dead man giving chase, soon overtook him and clamoured for blood revenge. He was taken before the khalifa, and as the case was so clear against him, he was sentenced to death. According to the custom of that time, execution followed as speedily as possible the passing of the sentence of death, and the executioner was at once sent for, the skin spread upon the ground, the man's hands were tied behind him,

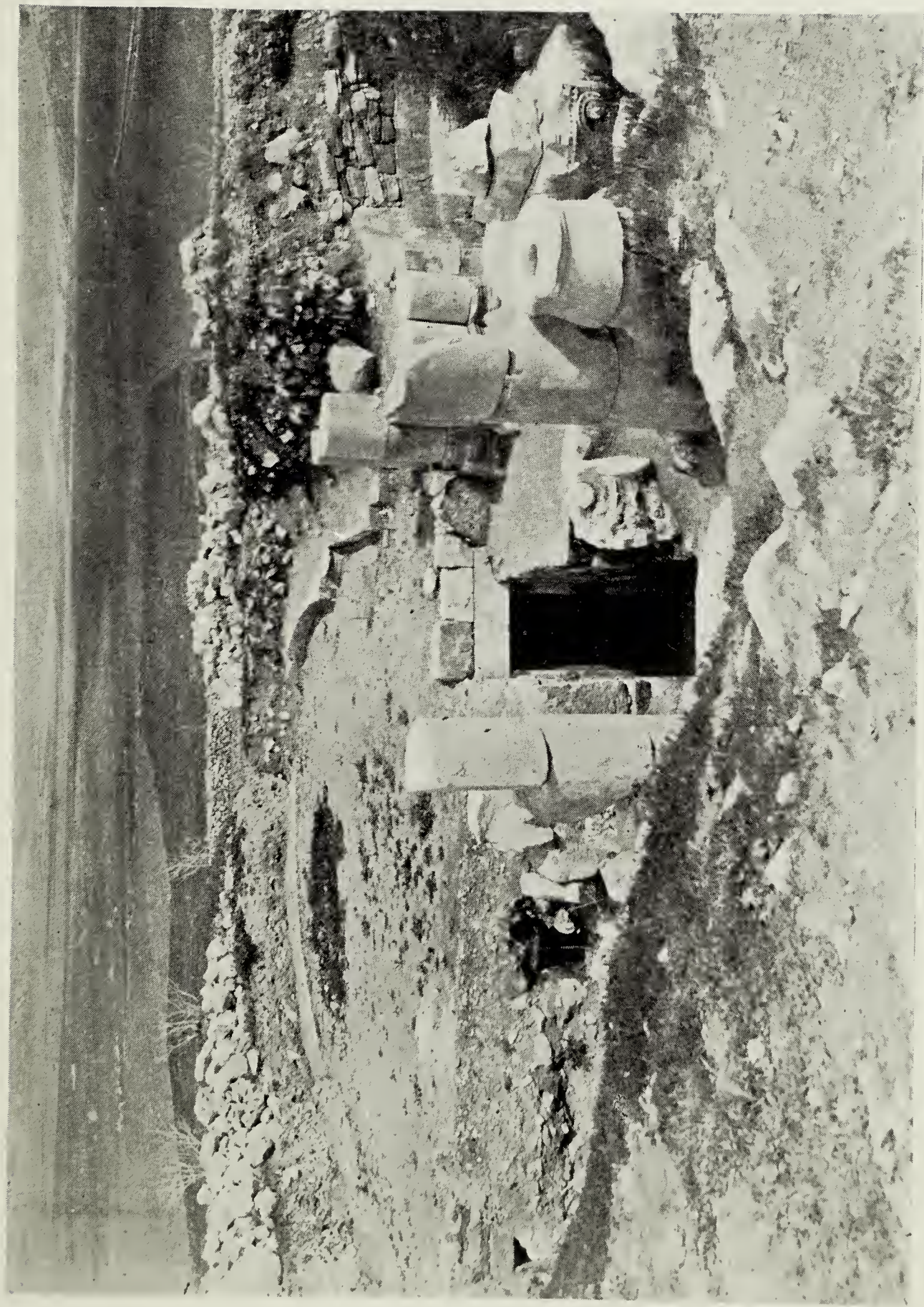
and it seemed likely that his head would soon be struck off. The poor man begged hard that he might have three days' respite, in order that he might go to his home to settle up his family affairs, previous to his departure from the world. The khalifa agreed that he would grant the respite asked for, conditionally that a surety could be found to be held as hostage till the man returned, at the same time assuring all present that, in case of the culprit not returning, the hostage would assuredly suffer death in his stead. As might be expected, under such circumstances, no one came forward to offer himself as surety till the prisoner's return. The moment for the execution drew near, and the man cried out in anguish: "Has all chivalry, virtue, and courage died out, that no one will help me to save my family affairs from ruin? I will most surely return, I tell the truth." At this appeal to chivalry and courage, one young man stepped in the breach and offered himself as an hostage, and, if necessary, a substitute for the condemned man. He was secured, and the man departed. On the third day the khalifa declared that as the murderer had not returned, the substitute should be put to death in his stead. The time by which he should have returned had arrived; but still the murderer came not, and so the hostage was brought forth and made to kneel on the execution skin. The khalifa asked him how he came to be such a fool as to offer himself in the culprit's place when he did not know him, where he lived, and whether he would return. "I did it," the man replied proudly, "because he asked if all chivalry and courage had died out, and I wanted to prove that it has not." "Well," said the khalifa, "and now you see what a fool you are, for I will assuredly put you to death."

According to custom the executioner advanced, and asked three times: "Is it your will, O Khalifa, that this man should die?" Twice the question had been answered in the affirmative, and for the third and last time the question was being put, and the executioner was raising his sword to strike the deadly blow, when some one cried

out: "Halt, O Khalifa, I see some one running with all speed and shouting, perhaps it may be the man for whom the surety stands."

And as all eyes were turned toward the man, they soon discovered it was indeed the murderer himself who had returned. He rushed in breathless, and dropping exhausted on the executioner's skin, cried: "Praise be to Allah, I am in time; executioner, now do your work." "But why," asked the khalifa, "did you return when you might have saved your life?" "I asked to go," the man replied, "not for my own sake, but because a poor widow had entrusted all her money to my keeping, and for safety I had hid it under a rock, where no one knew of it but myself. If I had died three days ago, the poor widow would have lost her all; for no one knew of the hiding-place but myself, and I wished for the respite that I might prove my honesty by restoring the money to her, and I have come back to die, that I may prove my truthfulness to my promised word." "Then," said the khalifa, "executioner, sheathe your sword, this unfortunate circumstance has revealed to me that not only virtue, courage and chivalry have not all died out; but also that honesty and truth are still to be found. I will pay the blood money from my own purse, and pardon the culprit; my brother, you are free."

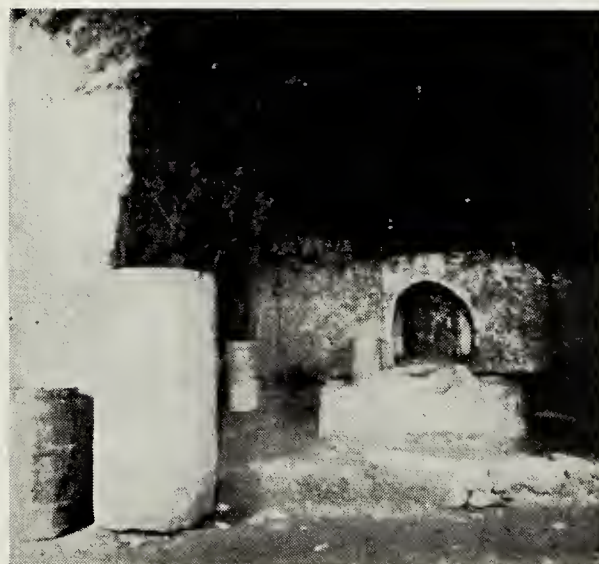
These are tales we can learn while sitting in camp over our tea, or after dinner in the evenings; and sometimes, unfortunately, after we have retired to rest, we hear tales and jokes galore outside our tents. But we have arrived at Nazareth, and have been recalling in a gossipy way these tales while resting and refreshing ourselves. Our tents are pitched under the olive trees, near the fountain; and though we do not venture on any walks to-day, in view of the time at our disposal to-morrow, yet we are interested, as we sit on our camp-chairs outside our tents, to watch the women and maidens of the village come in their bright, many-coloured dresses with their pitchers to



ENTRANCE TO JACOB'S WELL



INTERIOR OF JOSEPH'S TOMB



INTERIOR OF JACOB'S WELL



VALLEY OF SHECHEM



JENIN



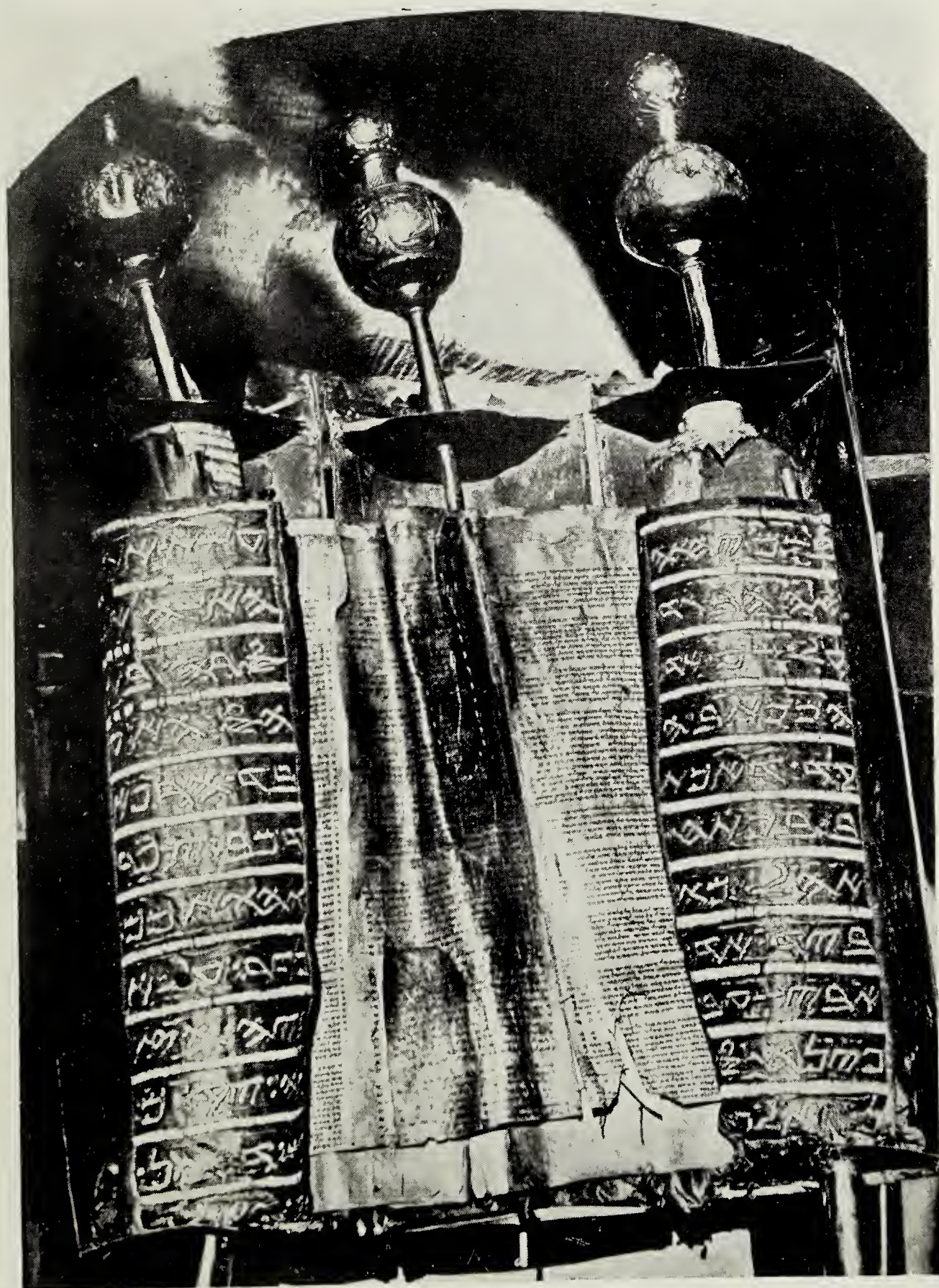
PLAIN OF ESDRAELON



PLOUGHING ON ESDRAELON

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THE OLD PENTATEUCH ROLL.

the fountain for water for the household supply. The scene at the village fountain is always interesting, and it is especially so in a large town like Nazareth, where in the evenings the women assemble in little groups for their evening gossip; and then, as they bear away their well-filled pitchers poised gracefully on their heads, it makes up a scene thoroughly Eastern.

As this is the only fountain in Nazareth, there can be no reasonable doubt that the Virgin Mary after whom it is named would come here evening by evening for the day's supply of water, perhaps bringing with her her little boy, just as the mothers of Nazareth do to-day. And no doubt, too, many a time our Saviour, as He came past here on His way home, would tarry to quench His thirst at this very stream, whose waters the traveller may drink to-day as a cup of blessing.

There are, as may be expected, a large number of reputed sites in Nazareth, mostly, however, without any more authority for their existence than the many other holy sites found by the Empress Helena, but it is interesting to walk among its narrow streets, to look into its carpenters' shops, and, if we ourselves give no credence to the holy places shown, it is pleasing to know that the events they call to mind did happen somewhere in this very town; that the people we see are most likely the descendants of those who were neighbours and townsfolk of Joseph and Mary, and that the dress they wear and the ploughs they use and the pitchers they carry are exactly the same as those used in Bible times, and reproduce the scenes recorded in the sacred volume. The men and women the Bible tells us of are no longer alive, but in their descendants whom we see around us, their ways and habits and customs are alive still. The Franciscan church and convent, at the south end of the town, is called by the Latins the Church of the Annunciation, for here legend asserts the house of the Virgin stood, and that here she was visited by the angel Gabriel, when he announced to her that she should bring forth a son. An inscription on the altar

informs us : *Hic verbum caro factum est* ("Here the word of God was made flesh").

A little behind this church, another, also owned by the Latins, is called the Chapel of Joseph's Workshop, and contains a good picture, by a modern artist, of Joseph and the boy Jesus in the carpenter's shop. The tradition of this chapel covering the site of Joseph's workshop, only dates from the seventeenth century.

Just across the way, another church of the Latins is called the Chapel of the Table of Christ; its peculiarity consisting in the circumstance that in the centre of the floor of the building a large rock protrudes out of the ground, on which it is averred Christ with His disciples sat at meat, both before and after the Resurrection; one tradition stating that the rock was formerly at Tiberias, but was brought miraculously here. I asked the priest who related to me the tradition, if he really believed such an absurdity; he grinned and said, "Of course not; I have lived in America." The tradition of this place again, is no older than the seventeenth century.

An older tradition anent the church on the site of the old synagogue is more venerable, for the place was converted into a church in the thirteenth century and its history can be traced as far back as the year 540. The building belongs to the Greek Church, and if it be really on the site of the synagogue of Christ's day, it is the scene of His first sermon, or exposition of Isaiah, and we must confess that our heart did beat with pilgrim emotion here.

Two of the hillocks round Nazareth are shown as the precipice where the populace led Christ out to the brow of the hill to cast Him down headlong, the rival sites belonging to the rival sects.

A rival Church of the Annunciation exists, belonging to the Greeks, near the well, for they have sufficient ingenuity to infer that the annunciation took place at the spring, when the Virgin came to draw water therefrom. Indeed, Nazareth is brimful of superstition, and the rivalry

to secure holy sites is very keen between the various sects.

Perhaps there is no other place of its size in the world where so many rival sects have institutions—where each is taught to despise, if not hate, each other—and yet all are kept going professedly in Christ's name, as at Nazareth. Here we find the Latin and Greek Churches strongly entrenched and in possession of various churches, convents, schools, colleges, hospitals, and orphanages, besides schools and orphanages specially for girls. The Maronites have their rival churches and institutions. The Protestants are represented in an English Church, parsonage and school. The Edinburgh Medical Mission has a church and a hospital; and there is an orphanage and school for girls, carried on by the Society for the Promotion of Female Education in the East. One wonders how they are all kept going: and yet—strange anomaly—this is in the place where in Christ's life-time, "all they in the synagogue rose up and cast Him out of their city," and sought to murder Him.

Of course there is a Moslem community here, representing about a third of the population, and the minaret of their mosque stands a prominent feature among the bell towers of the churches. One wonders what can be the effect and the advantage of the teaching among the Moslems by Christians who make the claim that the rock in the chapel of the Christi Mensa was miraculously brought here from Tiberias, and that the house of the Virgin was similarly carried away by angels and deposited at Loretto. It is no wonder that few, if any, converts are made from the Moslem population, and until the various Churches are purged of the accretions and adulterations which surround the Christian faith as presented by their teaching we fear little can be expected to be done.

Gladly we ourselves turn from such superstitions to watch at the wayside fountain, or, better still, to ramble up the neighbouring hill-sides, for we know that He must often have climbed up these slopes and looked down into the

valley—that all these paths must have been known to and trodden by Him—that the fifteen beautiful hills by which Nazareth is surrounded were all known to Him; and the flowers He loved, that bedecked the ground then as now, must have refreshed His gaze.

“ Oh ! to have watched Thee through the vineyards wander,
Pluck the ripe ears, and into twilight roam ;
Followed and known that in the twilight yonder
Legions of angels shone around Thy home.”

On one of our rambles we came across a happy group of children gathering flowers; they had each one of them a fine nosegay. Seeing us approach and watch them, the elder of the girls came near and said modestly, in excellent English: “ If you please, the children say will you accept the flowers? ” We told them that we should be delighted to do so, and that they should be used to decorate our dining-table that evening. And, moreover, we told them we would photograph their flowers, to show the children in England what beautiful flowers they had.

“ Would you like to photograph us too? ” they asked, for they saw we had a camera; and so we secured a picture of the little group, which we gladly keep as a memento of how respectfully and kindly Nazareth children can behave to strangers. “ Where did you learn English? ” we asked. “ At the girls’ school,” they replied; and surely they must have learned something of polite behaviour too, we thought, and we hope they learned something besides concerning Him Who, when He was on the earth, loved the children, and Who died that they might be gathered to the heavenly home. From the high hill at the back of the English orphanage an extensive and delightful panorama of Nazareth and surrounding country can be obtained; all around at our feet flowers of every hue bespangle the ground as a carpet; we think it is no wonder that Christ drew attention to and taught lessons from flowers; and in thinking of Nazareth as the scene of Christ’s youth we cannot but feel glad that He was brought up amid scenes of so much loveliness, where—



NAIN



NAIN AND MOUNT TABOR



WELL OF NAIN

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STREET OF COLUMNS, SAMARIA

[To face p. 172.]



CHURCH OF ST. JOHN, SAMARIA

[To face p. 172.]

“All through the summer night,
Those blossoms red and bright,
Spread their soft breasts unheeding to the breeze,
Like hermits watching still,
Around the sacred hill,
While erst our Saviour watched upon His knees.”

A pleasant morning or afternoon ride from Nazareth would be to Mount Tabor, that pretty, isolated, mound-like eminence we saw from Nain, which was for long, but without any authority, considered to be the scene of the Transfiguration, and which modern criticism has transferred to Mount Hermon as being the most likely place. It is, however, well worth a visit by any one having the time to spare for it. It is beautifully clothed with trees and shrubs and carpeted with flowers, and upon its summit ruins and clustered memorials of crusading zeal in perpetuating the Transfiguration scene are seen.

Leaving Nazareth for the Sea of Galilee, we soon see, after ascending over the hills which obscure the town from our vision, a village on a hill to the left, which, though a small one, like so many other small places we see in this country, was the birthplace of a great man in Old Testament history.

The village is called Gath Hepher, and here the prophet Jonah first saw the light; his tomb is also shown here, although, we must remark, it is shown in other places also.

Next we see, straight before us in the landscape, Kefr Kena, which by almost universal consent has been identified as the Cana of Christ's first miracle of making water into wine at the marriage feast.

Rival churches of the Greeks and Latins are here, each claiming to be built over the site of the house where the Saviour graced the feast with His presence, and that of the Greeks contains—so we are told—one of the jars which held the wine. Our photograph of this jar will show that it is of goodly proportions.

There is a fine spring of water at the entrance to the village, and standing beside this is a fine old stone sarcophagus, now used as a drinking trough for animals. We

thought some of the young maidens from Cana whom we saw drawing water from this spring were the prettiest we had seen in the country. Leaving Cana behind, with all its associations, apocryphal and real, we emerge on a vast plain where natives are ploughing, for this land is now being rapidly brought under cultivation by natives and also by Circassian colonists, the land being exceedingly fertile. Indeed, we remember that we once rode over it through miles of flowers which reached to the horses' breasts before it was first broken up; and the seeds from these are a terrible trouble to the farmers now, who look upon the flowers as mere weeds, and the wild product of Mother Nature.

By and by we come to a large square pool of water enclosed by ancient masonry, where the flocks and herds of the Bedouins congregate to drink, and beside this there are the ruins of what must have been a grand old khan. A little farther on we observe on our left the peculiar-shaped summit of the hill of Hattin, on which, according to a late tradition, Christ preached His Sermon on the Mount. The scene of this, we think, must have been nearer the lake than the hill we see. It has, however, another association upon which we can look back with more confidence, for this is no doubt the scene of that last and terrible conflict, when in 1187 the crusaders were finally defeated by Saladin, by which the Christian kingdom of Palestine passed away, and the crescent has ever since usurped the cross in the Holy Land. After another hour's ride we ascend the lofty plateau of Ard el-Hama, where the view of the Lake of Galilee bursts upon us, and then we descend by steep zigzags to Tiberias. Our tents are pitched half-a-mile beyond the south end of the town in a pleasant position near the hot baths, which, after tea, we visit. We put our finger into a stream of water as it issues from a fissure in the ground at the foot of the hill, but very quickly pull it out again, for the water seems to be nearly boiling hot. It does seem very curious indeed to us, whose experience has only been limited to cold springs,



APPROACH TO NAZARETH



NAZARETH AND GREEK CHURCH

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NAZARETH, GENERAL VIEW

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TIBERIAS



FLOWERS OF NAZARETH



ENGLISH CHURCH, NAZARETH



MOUNT TABOR



WATERPOT AT CANA

[To face p. 180]



HORNS OF HATTIN



CANA OF GALILEE

[To face p. 182]

to find that water so very hot can be constantly issuing from the earth; but we must remember that the whole district is volcanic, and the subterranean fires cannot be so very far away. The district has suffered severely at various times by earthquake, and grim evidence of the last, which occurred in 1837, is preserved in the shattered walls of the old castle and fortress we passed on our coming to the town.

We are promised fresh fish for supper to-night, as our muleteers have already, ere we arrived, caught some from the water near by—at least they tell us so—or did they purchase it from the fishermen of the town for a trifle? We think the latter is the more likely, as most of the natives here are fishermen. But, any way, we are glad to taste the fish from the same waters where the Apostles fished, and we enjoy the meal all the more, as we think the Saviour Himself must very often have partaken of a similar one.

We once heard a lecturer, in giving a lecture on the Holy Land, which, however, he had never seen himself, make the statement that “there are no fish in the Sea of Galilee now.” From whence he could have derived that information we are at a loss to say, for all the writers of whom we have any knowledge who have visited the lake testify to the abundance of fish still in its waters. We are interested in finding in the Jewish cemetery on the hill-side not far away the plain tomb of Maimonides, the great Jewish philosopher, and also the tomb of the famous rabbi Ben Akiba, who took part in the revolt against the Romans under Bar Cochba, the false Messiah.

The town itself, which is entered through a picturesque gateway in the decaying old wall, is composed of dirty streets and houses, more than half of which are inhabited by Jews; for Tiberias is one of the four Jewish holy cities. There are, however, in pleasing contrast to the houses of the native population, where, it is said, the king of the fleas holds his court, the beautiful terraced house and hospital of the Scotch mission, and the convents of the

Greek and Catholic Christians, where visitors are received and lodged in clean and comfortable rooms.

There is also the convenient new hotel, kept by a German, who, as a consumptive, came to Tiberias seeking relief for his complaint, and built it for a residence and hostelry. He is a most obliging host, and it is pleasing to record that he has found both health and the means of supporting his family here, besides supplying a real need for travellers without tents.

The town was first built by Herod during the time of Christ, when the lake was surrounded by numerous towns and villages with a dense population. Herod named it Tiberias as a compliment to his emperor, and it was here that, later on, Josephus the historian was made governor, a position he enjoyed for ten years, at the close of which he went to Rome with the captives, after the triumph of Titus, and there he wrote his works.

It is not mentioned that Christ Himself ever visited Tiberias, nor is it hardly likely He did so, as it was built on the site of a burying-ground, and would, therefore, be considered an unclean place for the Jews. But the associations of the district and lake are unspeakably sacred, and we shall never forget when on one bright moonlight night we met, on the roof of the Latin convent, where we were at that time staying, a Christian minister, and our hearts burned within us as we communed together, and recalled the incidents brought to mind by the scene before us, and those words of McCheyne—

“How pleasant to me is thy deep blue wave,
O Sea of Galilee!
For the glorious One who came to save,
Hath often stood by thee.

Gracefully around thee the mountains meet,
Thou calm reposing sea,
But oh! far more the beautiful feet
Of Jesus who walked o’er thee.

O Saviour! gone to God’s right hand,
But the same Saviour still,
Graved on Thy heart is this lovely strand,
And every fragrant hill.”



FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN, NAZARETH



CHAPEL OF THE TABLE OF CHRIST



THE OLD SYNAGOGUE

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KHAN JOSEPH



ROSPINA



SAFED



“ BESIDE THE STILL WATERS ”



SHEEP ON HILL-SIDE

[To face p. 186]

Sometimes during a storm the lake is lashed to fury, and this occurred one day when we were in camp here, so that not only could we not have the boat-ride we had anticipated, but we could see but little of the lake itself. On other occasions, however, we have been able to take a boat, and under the most ideal conditions make the sail over the sea to Magdala, Bethsaida and Capernaum, sometimes pulling to the banks and landing to admire the flora, especially the clumps of oleanders which adorn and beautify its shores.

Near where our view was taken, in the cliffs above, Herod in his young days earned fame by clearing out the robbers from its almost inaccessible positions by letting his soldiers down from above by means of ropes to the strongholds for the purpose. It may have been near here, too, that Christ chose as His disciples the fishermen of the lake.

It is a remarkable circumstance that He chose for His disciples no one from His native town of Nazareth, for, as He well said: "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country." It was most likely on the hill above here He preached His Sermon on the Mount, and fed the five thousand from the five loaves and two fishes; and surely the boat we see recalls the command: "Cast the net on the right side, and ye shall find." It was near here He came to His affrighted disciples during the storm, and said: "Peace, be still." And somewhere along this strand He appeared to the Apostles after the Resurrection, when He three times over put the question to Peter: "Lovest thou Me?" and gave the command to feed His sheep.

It is not with any absolute certainty that we can locate any of the towns of Christ's day; the village of Mejdél is thought to be Magdala, the birthplace of Mary Magdalene; beyond Mejdél lies the plain of Gennesar, or Gennesareth; then we come to some ruins and a Latin convent usually identified as Bethsaida, and farther on we reach the ruins of Tell Hum, where the recent excavations have seemed to establish the supposition that it is Capernaum. Certainly the foundations of a large building appear to be the ancient Jewish synagogue, and it is with good reason thought to

be the one referred to as built by the Roman centurion of whom it was said: "He loveth our nation, and hath built us a synagogue."

If so, it must have been visited by our Lord, Who in His discourse referred to the manna in the wilderness, and it is a striking fact that among the ruined sculptures is a representation of a pot of manna. Some distance behind Tell Hum are ruins which are thought to mark the site of Chorazin; and a little distance beyond Capernaum is the spot where the upper Jordan runs into the lake.

On the other side of the lake is the country of the Gadarenes, now rarely visited, because of the numerous Bedouin robber tribes who are in possession of the district.



NAZARETH FROM THE HILLS



CHILDREN OF NAZARETH

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SEA OF GALILEE

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CHAPTER XII

IN CAMP TO BANIAS AND DAMASCUS

THOSE without camp can take boats from Tiberias to Semak, and thence by train up the Yermuk valley, over the plain of the Hauran, and on to Damascus, a journey that can be done in one day. But we are in camp, and so leaving the boats to be taken back to Tiberias, we take our horses at Tell Hum and ascend among the steep hills of Naphtali, from which we obtain a fine view over the lake; and after about an hour's riding we come to a large ruined khan, called Khan Joseph; it derives its name from an absurd Arab tradition, that the pit into which Joseph was thrown by his brethren was situated here.

The khan does not appear to be inhabited now, but the nomadic tribes and native shepherds bring their cattle and sheep here at night-time for protection and water.

We can continue our journey from here by Safed, another Jewish holy city, and largely inhabited by Jews, most of whom live on alms sent from Europe, and some of whom, it is said, still practise polygamy; the town is beautifully situated on a hill-side, and is by some thought to have been the place referred to as "a city set on a hill," although I think no particular place was meant, for scores of such in Samaria and Galilee could claim the description.

But there is another more direct way to Banias, and one we think more interesting.

By this route we leave Safed on the left, and near an old native village called Jaunah we are surprised to see a colony of modern looking, detached villa residences, built of stone and roofed in with tiles; the houses and grounds enclosed by walls, and surrounded by eucalyptus trees, which give the place a fresh and pleasant appearance. This is the

modern Jewish colony called Rospina, and was founded to give persecuted Jewish emigrants from Poland, Roumania, and other countries in Europe, a place where they could live in peace, and if industrious, retrieve their fortunes. The land was purchased by well-known Jewish philanthropists in a fertile and well-watered district; houses were built and walled in; lands enclosed with hedges of acacia; orchards were planted with fruit trees; water laid on into every house and farmyard; roads were made, metalled, and lighted with street lamps. Expert Scotch agriculturists were sent out with the latest implements to plough and sow the fields, and it was thought it would be an ideal asylum for families driven from Europe. Of course there were soon plenty of candidates for the openings provided, especially as they could take possession of the houses and lands in going condition. They were told they would be required to pay a nominal rent and taxes for five years, and if by that time they showed their adaptability for the work of farming, the freehold would be given to them. But the experiment was very disappointing to the promoters, who had spent some £400,000 on the project, as the Jews installed not only failed to pay any rent, or keep their taxes from getting into arrears, but neglected to cultivate the fields, or even replace the stones that had fallen from the boundary fences into the roadway. And in order to save the lands from being confiscated for non-payment of taxes, as well as to provide supplies to keep the families from starving, it cost the promoters £25,000 a year to keep them going.

The last time I was there they were told they would be given one more chance, that their lands would be planted for them once again, and each household supplied with from one hundred to four hundred pounds, according to the size of their families, and then that no more could be done for them.

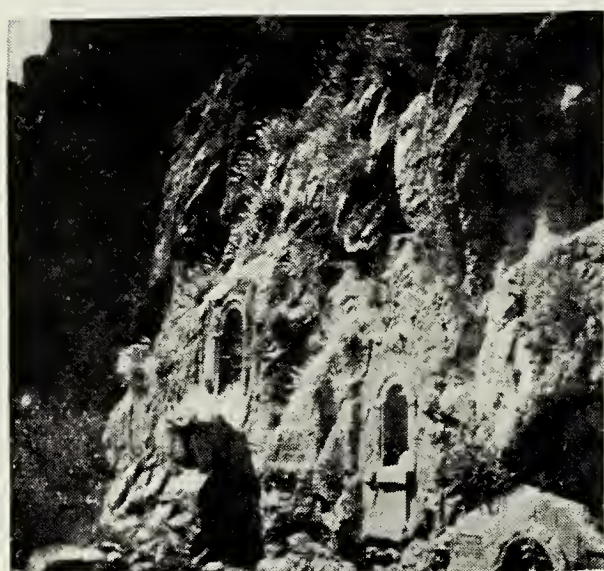
I thought how many hardworking English farm labourers would jump at the chance and do well. But then, English farm labourers are not Jews, there is no sentiment about



SOURCE OF THE JORDAN



MOUND AT DAN



TEMPLE OF PAN



APPROACH TO BANIAS



DAMASCUS



CASTLE OF BANIAS

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English farm labourers—and no one collects money for them. Well, after that caution and warning, of course, those Jews would live—till the money was gone—and they knew that some one would be kind enough to collect more money for the poor, persecuted, afflicted Jews of Palestine again. It is true some of the colonies are pointed out as in a flourishing condition, but at what cost? I was told by the manager of one of the banks in Jerusalem, that no less than £780,000—more than three-quarters of a million—had passed through his bank in one year for the relief of the Jews.

I noticed as I passed through Zimmarin, on Carmel, that pretty much the same conditions prevail there as at Rospina. I formed the idea that the Jews have no liking, or aptness for agricultural pursuits; their vocation is buying and selling; mercantile pursuits is their forte, and in this they succeed as no other class can do.

From Rospina we proceed through the plain skirting the swamps of Lake Huleh, on our right, called in the Old Testament the waters of Merom, in which we saw droves of amphibious buffaloes up to their necks in the muddy water.

On our left we saw flocks of sheep foraging for herbage on the hills, reminding us of “the cattle on a thousand hills,” and here we were glad to see something of the shepherd-life of the country. For it is in the shepherd-life of the land we are taken back, so to speak, to Bible times, almost more than in anything else we see.

It is the shepherd-life that throws light on the lives of the patriarchs, the language of the Psalmist, and the sayings of the great Teacher Himself.

In Palestine the sheep always follow the shepherd, they are never driven there, we saw it over and over again in passing through the land, sheep following the shepherd, wherever he led them. “My sheep hear My voice,” says the Saviour, “and I know them and they follow Me.” And here we were reminded of how the sheep do know the shepherd’s voice, and that each one knows its own name, for

as we were riding along we saw a shepherd lad playing a reed pipe for amusement, and when he saw us approaching, just as if to show how clever he was with his sheep, he called one of the sheep by its name. The sheep looked up, came galloping down the hill-side, and put its nose against the lad's bosom. Then he called another, and that in like manner did the same. In order to test if they all knew their names, I asked him to call the sheep with the brown ear; he called it, and it came immediately, and like the others stood by the lad, as if to say, "You called me, here I am." Our dragoman had been brought up as a shepherd lad in his young days, and knew the calls; I asked the lad the name of another sheep I pointed out, and then asked the dragoman to imitate as nearly as he could the shepherd lad's voice and call that sheep; he did so, and the sheep looked up, it knew its name; but it did not come. "A stranger they will not follow." The reason of the sheep knowing so well their names is, that the shepherds live entirely with their flocks, and the children and lambs are brought up together. We saw an instance of this that same evening while we were in camp: a little boy, the son of a shepherd who lived in a tent close by our camp, came and watched us out of curiosity, as we sat round our tents. He had with him as companion and playmate a lamb; they seemed inseparable companions, for if the lamb, in feeding round our tent, got out of sight for a moment the child called it by its name, and it would come at once; and when once we enticed the lad inside our tent to give him some fruit, the lamb missed the boy and "baa'ed" to know where he had gone, on hearing which the child ran out and put his hand on the lamb's head, as if to say, "I am here."

The manner in which the sheep know the shepherd's voice, and respond to his call, once saved a man the loss of his whole flock.

A man was tending his sheep in the plain of the Jordan, whither he had led them into pasture, when three men from across the river from the mountains of Moab came and

entered into—apparently friendly—conversation with him. Watching a chance, as the man was unsuspecting of any danger, one got behind, and with a club struck the shepherd on the back of his head, felling him to the ground in an unconscious condition. Not caring whether he was dead or alive, they drove the flock across the river and into the uplands on the other side. After three hours the man began to recover his senses, and in a dazed condition he looked round, and cried, “Oh, where am I?” As he recovered his consciousness more fully and felt the pain of his bruised head he began to realise that he had been attacked and maltreated; and then his first thought was for his flock. Where were they? Gradually remembering the men who had been talking with him, he came to the conclusion that the object of their attacking him was robbery, and that they had in fact stolen his sheep. He began to cry—he was ruined, what should he do? Then, remembering how that the sheep knew his voice more than any other, he went to the nearest tents, got a man to come with a gun, who hid in the shrubs on the bank of the river; and then the shepherd, putting his hand to his mouth, uttered loudly his favourite call. And not in vain; the sheep heard the loved voice calling them: they ran down the hill-sides, swam across the river, and so the shepherd recovered his flock, all but one, which the robbers had already killed. When the men who had stolen the sheep saw them making with all speed towards the river, they were furious and ran after them, but too late, the sheep had crossed the river; and then the man with the gun stood out from his hiding-place, and said, “The first of you who steps into the water I will shoot,” which awed them from coming farther.

The man who told me this incident was an eyewitness of the recovery of the sheep, being, in fact, the man who had the gun.

And while the sheep are up on the mountain-sides they will sometimes in reaching for some tuft of grass overbalance and, falling into a ravine, will be bruised, or

often get a broken leg; then the shepherd will leave the main flock to seek for the missing one, and when he has found it he will bring it up on his shoulders rejoicing. Twice I have seen a shepherd so bringing up a wounded sheep on his shoulder; and many of the shepherds being skilled in rough surgery, will carefully set and bind splints to the broken leg. It is the shepherd's duty, too, to protect the sheep from danger; he has to guard them at night from wild beasts, which still are numerous in country places and the mountains, and his courage is sometimes tested still more than in defending them from wild beasts, by protecting them from the marauding robber Bedouins, who on every chance will raid on a flock; and a good shepherd may at such times still be called upon to lay down his life for his sheep. But a good shepherd must be tender and kind as well as brave, and may often be seen carrying a lamb in his bosom, and gently leading those that are with young. One such scene I saw one day: a shepherd was gently leading his flock, and was carrying a young lamb in his bosom. I thought it too good an opportunity to be lost, and I snapshotted the scene before the shepherd knew what I was doing. In the heat of the midday they lead them to the still waters, and at night-time, wherever possible, they put them for safety into the sheepfold, or failing this a cave, and in bringing them home the sheep have still to be divided from the goats, which have to be driven before.

Leaving our camping-place in the plain, we now follow the bank of the upper Jordan, the foliage along which—principally oleanders—"in full blossom bright and red," was delightful to the eye, although the sap of the plant is said to be poisonous. Blackberry brambles flourished here abundantly, and reminded us pleasantly of the hedge-rows at home.

The Jordan leads us to Tel-el-Kadi, the ancient Dan, where there is a large *tell* or mound, covered when we were there with yellow marguerites, making the mound gay with their golden wreaths.



SHEEP FOLLOWING SHEPHERD



SHEPHERD WITH LAMB IN BOSOM

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CHILDREN AND LAMBS



SHEPHERD LEADING SHEEP



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DIVIDING THE SHEEP FROM THE GOATS

The situation of Dan was a surprise, large trees, abundant herbage, gay flowers, and gushing streams made the place a very paradise. Why, we wonder, is it totally uninhabited now?—for we saw no sign of a habitation anywhere. A ruined mill clustered with clinging vines we saw not far away; but, although we clambered over its walls, we saw no human being near. But how delightful it was to sit under the trees and have our alfresco lunch beside the crystal, bubbling stream! Surely Mark Twain could never have been here, or he would not have described Palestine as being—“a blighted, blasted, sandy, sunburnt, dreary, ugly, and infamous country!” Near by, one of the largest springs in the world gushes out from the fountain, which is the main source of the Jordan, a full-grown stream at the start, some fifty paces wide, and it must issue from an underground current formed by the melting snows of Hermon.

Dan is the northern limit of Palestine proper, and leaving it behind we enter Syria.

Many persons have made comment on the smallness of the Holy Land, and remarked that it seems so impossible that a country no larger than our little Wales should have been chosen as the ultimate home of a race which should become “as numerous as the stars for multitude,” or “as the sands on the sea shore that they cannot be numbered,” which expressions are, of course, two figures of hyperbole, or exaggeration, common in Eastern expression; yet, remembering the large number of Jews who are scattered all over the world, it would seem impossible that they should find residence, much less sustenance, in a country so small. We must remember, however, that the land of promise was by no means confined to the country we know as Palestine; but that it comprised all the lands from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates; and we must remember also that the soil of the land is of extraordinary fertility when brought under proper cultivation, and that the vast plains of the Hauran even now yield an enormous supply of corn for export.

Leaving the spring, and turning round behind the knoll from whence the waters burst forth, we are surprised and puzzled at a curious formation behind this knoll; we were unable, from a cursory examination, to judge if it were an artificial erection or some freak of nature, the result perhaps of volcanic upheaval. On arriving at our tents in the evening we hastily turned to Professor G. Adam Smith's *Historical Geography* for an explanation, but were unable to get any elucidation from that splendid work, as we expected; nor does Rob Roy on the Jordan seem to notice it, and we are anxious to revisit the place again for a more thorough examination.

The path now gradually ascends eastward, through the oaks of Bashan, and in about an hour and a half we reach Banias. We soon discover that we are at, what must have been, an important place in the Roman period, as columns are lying around in all directions. These remind us that Banias is the ancient Cæsarea Philippi, a name given to it by Philip the Tetrarch, Herod's son. But the older Greek name of the place, Paneas, so-called because of the Panceon, or Sanctuary of Pan, which was here, has never entirely disappeared, and both names are frequently found on the coins of the Ptolemies. The present village, consisting of about fifty houses, is charmingly situated amid a teeming luxuriance of vegetation, which is called into being by the abundance of water flowing from the Banias springs. The remains of the walls and towers which surround the town show that they were constructed on a gigantic scale. The East gate or portal still stands, and is approached by a stone bridge which spans the stream and is covered with maidenhair fern, growing wild, being watered by the dripping water from the channel of the old aqueduct which crossed the bridge, and which, with the massing clumps of oleanders, make a refreshing sight.

Our tents are pitched on the opposite side of the town among the olive trees near the spring. Above us rises a precipitous cliff of limestone rock mingled with basalt,



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A SHEEPFOLD

beneath which a large cave exists. It was formerly from this cavern the waters gushed out in one large stream from the mountain; but owing to a great fall of débris, which is said to have occurred at the birth of Christ, the channel through which the water ran was here blocked up, and the imprisoned waters burst through the mass of rocks making new channels just beyond. From these channels an abundant stream of water flows forth, and forms the head source of the Jordan. By this cave, or over it, stood the temple of Pan, erected by Herod in honour of Augustus, and several votive niches still adorn the face of the cliff at the side of the cave.

On the small terrace above the cave is a *wely*, or tomb, in charge of a Moslem custodian, called the Tomb of St. George, and from this terrace a fine view of the surrounding country is obtained. Our horses were tethered during our stay here on a grassy turf a little distance from our tents, beneath some olive trees, and in going to see the animals I found beneath the turf which a horse had kicked away a tessellated pavement, perhaps the floor of a palace, and suggesting a profitable site for excavation.

It was to this place our Lord came seeking the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and it was here He put to His disciples the questions: "Whom do the people say that I am?" and "Whom say ye that I am?"

It was on some lofty peak not far away He went with His disciples, Peter, James and John, and was transfigured before them. Here too He cured the demoniac, after the disciples had tried and failed. The exact spot where the Transfiguration scene occurred has been the subject of much controversy, and many places are claimed. Some have thought the summit of Hermon a likely spot, the Arabs of Hermon point to Rasheya, as the legendary site; while of course for ages Tabor enjoyed the distinction of being the place. That the latter could scarcely have been the place there are abundant reasons, of which the statement that the demoniac often threw himself into the water, is

perhaps the most convincing, as there is no water around Tabor. But here at Banias all the conditions of the place are in harmony with the Gospel narrative, and there can be no reasonable doubt that we are here in the vicinity of the scene of Christ's Transfiguration glory. It is quite useless to attempt to fix with any positive certainty the exact site, and it is unimportant, for if it had been important it would have been mentioned; and it is very noticeable that the early Christians before the time of Constantine attached very little importance to the identity of sacred places. There is, however, a peak of Hermon near here called Subebbeh, which seems to me to fulfil, better than any other place I have seen, all the conditions required in the narrative. It is a lofty and almost isolated peak towering some 1500 feet above Banias, and 2300 feet above the level of the sea. From the summit of this an almost unequalled panorama, said to be the most magnificent in Syria, is obtained. From here may be seen the hills of Bashan, the hills of Galilee, the plain of Huleh, the slopes of Hermon, and the distant mountains of Moab, beyond the Jordan. The summit of this peak is only about one hour's ride, or walk, from Cæsarea, and I suggest that this is the most likely of all the places that can be found. On the top is what is called a castle; but it is so huge—so vast—it seems more like a series of castles all joined together than one, being three hundred and thirty yards long and one hundred yards wide, and many of the stones are of large size and exquisite workmanship.

Who the builders of these vast structures were we know not, and the purpose for which they were built seems lost in obscurity. We fear the mystery will continue until some millionaire with money to spare can find funds for its exploration, and surely he might spend it in some less useful way.

The journey between Banias and Damascus is of comparatively little interest compared with that through which we have come; some Druse villages are passed; the



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OLD ROMAN GATEWAY, BANIAS

volcanic plain at the base of snow-topped Hermon; the picturesque terraced town of Bêt Jen; and Kefr Hawar, near which is pointed out a mound called the tomb of Nimrod, the mighty hunter, and a branch of the river Pharpar, but there is little else worth halting to see.

CHAPTER XIII

DAMASCUS AND THE LEBANON DISTRICT

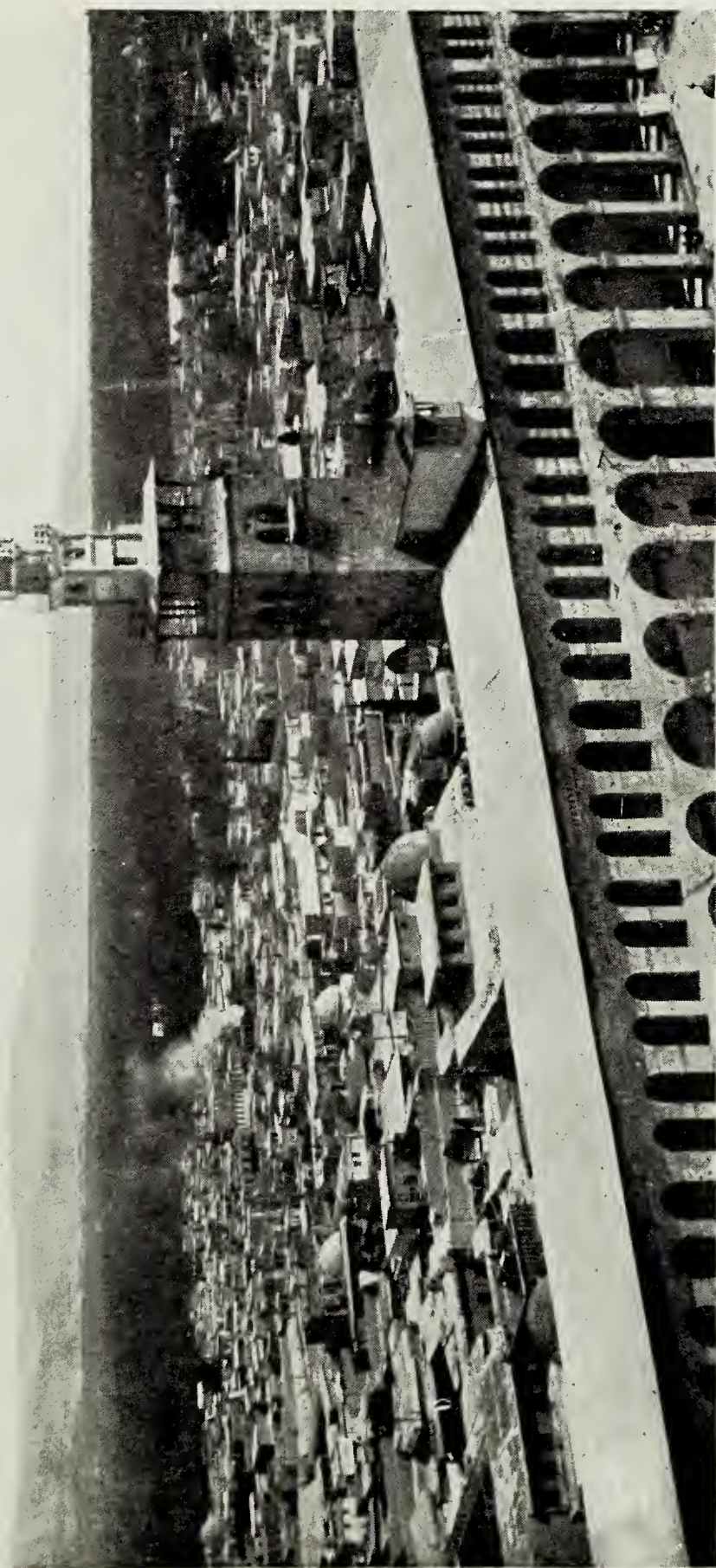
DAMASCUS is one of the oldest cities in the world, but though so old it is still a place of great importance. It is, indeed, the largest city in the Turkish Empire next to Constantinople, and is the capital of Syria.

The reason of its having maintained its position through all the ages is very readily seen on entering it; for the glory of the place is its streams, which, flowing into it, not only form an abundant supply of one of the greatest necessities of life, but by fertilising the district all around make the place in which it stands so extraordinarily beautiful that there is no wonder it has called forth the praises of all who have seen it; and there is scarcely another large city with such a wealth of pure water.

It has often been repeated that Mahomed, when he came in sight of it, refused to enter it, as there was only one paradise he could enter, and he had another in view than this. No doubt, coming as he did from the desert of Arabia, it appeared as such to him. The finest general view of the city is obtained from the hills above the suburban village of Saliheyeh, where, encircled by gardens, it looks as if enclosed within a wreath of green foliage, and has been compared to a pearl set in emeralds.

“Though old as history itself thou art fresh as the breath of Spring; blooming in thine own rosebud; and fragrant as thine own orange-flower; O Damascus, Pearl of the East.”

Another good point of vantage is on the top of one of the minarets of the great mosque; here we get a near view, and as it bursts upon the gaze when we reach the open platform at the top of the stairway we are constrained to



DAMASCUS FROM MINARET OF MOSQUE

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DAMASCUS FROM THE HILLS

utter an exclamation of astonishment, for it seems like a dream from the *Arabian Nights*.

But the streets of the interior of the city are, as may be expected in so old a place, for the most part narrow and dirty, and the buildings on their exterior walls mean and unattractive. But we find that down many of these narrow streets, and hidden by these plain and dilapidated walls, beautiful courtyards and handsomely embellished rooms form the interior, and we are surprised that we are allowed to enter some of the richest and most beautiful of these without let or hindrance or any formality.

We one day turned to enter one of the finest of these mansions, but seeing the gentleman and his wives sitting round a table having, apparently, afternoon tea, or perhaps sherbet, we drew back; it seemed like an intrusion and a breach of good manners for us to go in.

But the gentleman waved his hand for us to come on, and took no further notice, while we walked about his beautifully furnished and richly carpeted rooms as if it were simply a public museum.

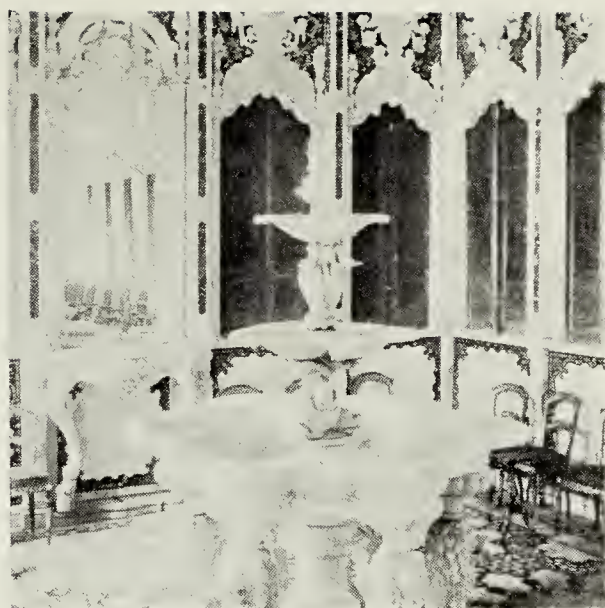
Some of these rooms to which visitors are taken, it is true, are show places; for the owners, having fallen on hard times, are glad to reap a little advantage by charging a fee for admission. One rich Jewish merchant, some time ago, intended to build for himself a palace of marble, the interior of which was to be elaborately sculptured; he had just completed one room at a cost of £10,000, when the Sultan hearing of it, probably from a jealous rival, thought he had got too rich; he thereupon sent and politely confiscated the man's wealth, and the room finished is now the family's only source of income, a franc a head being charged for admission. Damascus being the largest city we come to, as well as one possessing the greatest antiquity, a good opportunity is afforded here to observe customs and habits of Oriental life. We see a man coming along the street bearing a leathern bottle of water, and carrying in his hand a cup; he cries: "Ho, ye thirsty, come and drink; without money and without price." He is a dispenser of

water, which is distributed gratuitously, as sometimes rich men will bequeath money for the purpose. Lemonade and liquorice-water sellers also come along, rattling brass cups, and crying: "O God, the bountiful; may God make it refreshing to you." Turkish delight and sweetmeat vendors shout: "Oh! sweet as honey; refresh thy heart." A man comes along proudly, and, indeed, well may he be proud, for he is accompanied by three of his wives, and they have each a heavy load, while he walks along untrammelled. What are wives for? Here we see men sitting by the roadside writing; they are scribes, and as many of the natives are uneducated, these scribes fill a very useful place in society, by reading the letters sent to the natives and writing replies; and they are not simply clerks writing from dictation either, for, as the native could hardly dictate a letter, these men have often to act as adviser and lawyer as well as clerk.

And once again, here are two poor women sitting in a doorway grinding corn in a hand-mill; these primitive mills were until recently in almost universal use, and are still employed in the villages throughout the country; the women generally employed for this task are old, the work is tedious, and they sit grinding away at their weary work, and grinding their weary lives, until one of them dies, when, of course, "one is taken and the other left." We notice as a characteristic of the place that there are an immense number of mosques, for Damascus is essentially a Moslem city; and another characteristic is that each trade keeps to its own quarters; thus in one part we shall find all drapers or linen merchants side by side; farther on, all are saddle-makers; then bootmakers, followed by goldsmiths; a little farther turners and woodworkers ply their trades in what look like mere cupboards opening to the street; the lathes of the turners are very primitive affairs; the turners squat on their haunches and use their toes as well as their hands for the work. Next coppersmiths and brass-workers may be seen hammering sheets of copper or brass into shape, making copper pans and utensils and



STREET SCENE, DAMASCUS



RICHLY-SCULPTURED ROOM



LETTER WRITERS



COURTYARD OF HOUSE

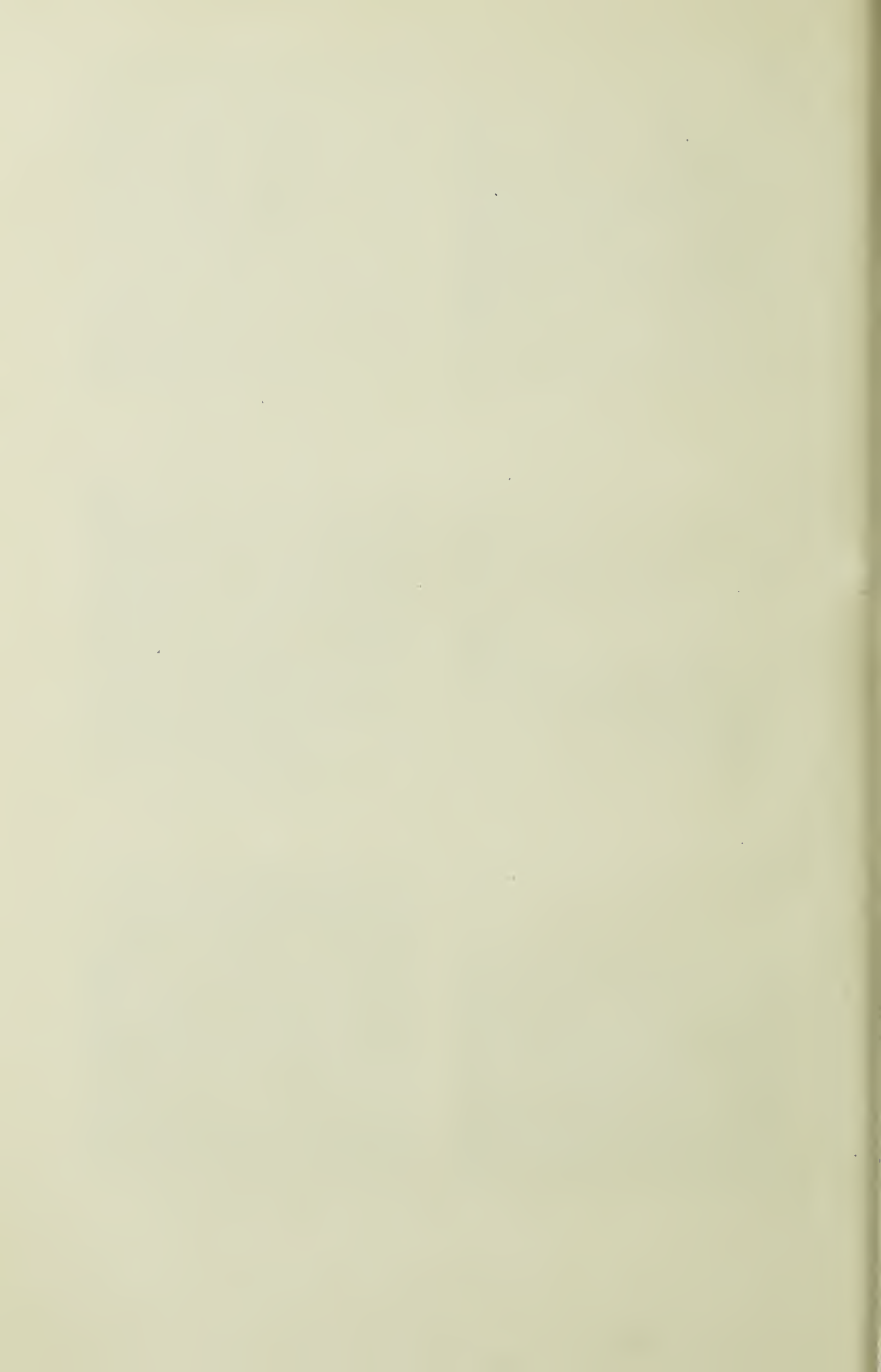


DAMASCUS, FROM A ROOF



WOMEN GRINDING CORN

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brass trays with elaborate designs. In the factories or workrooms visitors are welcomed to see vases and ornaments in brass produced. The piece of brass is first roughly fashioned into a plain cup, bottle, or vase; it is then filled with pitch, and wrought upon with a hammer and chisel by children who are brought up to the work from a very early age, and who seem to us, poor little things, scarcely better than slaves. Mother-of-pearl and ivory inlaid work is very skilfully done by expert workmen; and in mean and dirty workshops, with the most simple looms, skilled artificers weave the finest silks for which Damascus is so famous. Then there are shops of the merchants, for the rich carpets of Smyrna, Persia, and India, and others for swords, guns, etc. But the shops are not shops at all, according to our ideas; they are simply good-sized cupboards, with doors opening on to the street, and without glass windows; the goods are piled all around the sides, and the merchant sits in the doorway smoking his narghile so unconcernedly that we imagine they are poor men of business, especially as they will scarcely deign to take any notice of you when you ask the price of any article; but after repeated inquiries they will probably say carelessly: "Take it for nothing." This, however, is only a matter of form, a catch-word; a refinement, in fact, of our own advertisements which day by day offer to send so many things free for the asking. Presently, however, he will lay aside his pipe to settle down to business, and woe betide you if you have any money with you!—he will have it from you if at all possible; for, after all, they are good, pushing business men, although at first sight they may not appear to be so, and their first appearance of reluctance or indifference to serve you being only their method to make you the more eager to obtain the goods.

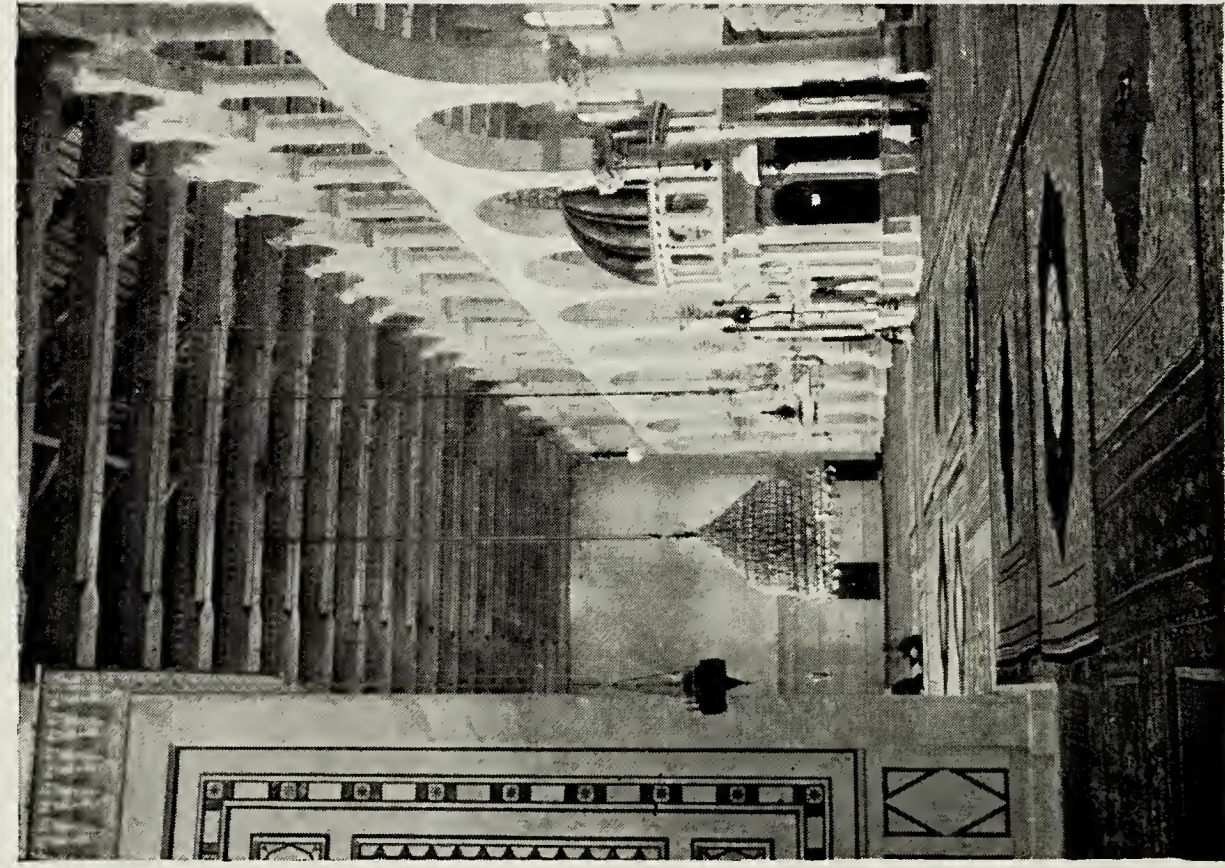
Visitors are allowed admission to the great mosque by the payment of an admission fee, and with slippered feet to tread on its priceless carpetings; it is well worth the fee charged, and is a sight that should be by no means omitted by any one paying a visit to the city. There are no seats

provided, for the natives sit on the carpets, and perform their devotions on their knees.

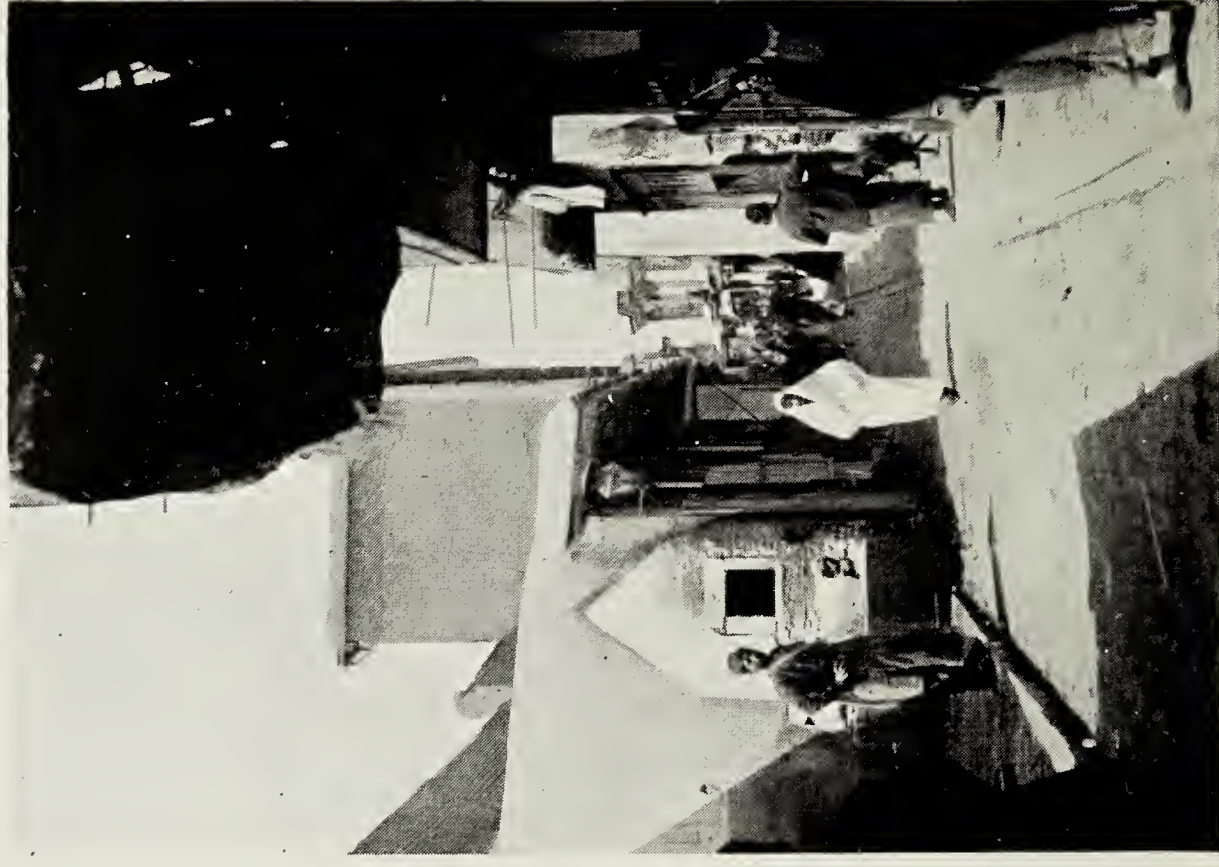
The mosque has lately been rebuilt, as nearly as possible on the same plan as the old one, which was burnt down a few years ago. In the interior a rich canopied shrine is said to cover the burial-place of the head of John the Baptist, and the spot is held in great reverence. The minaret of Medinet-el-Gharbiyeh may be ascended from the interior of the mosque, for the beautiful view over the town and away to the hills; the view is well worth the trouble involved in the ascent. There is another minaret, that of the Bride, the ascent of which is said to be prohibited, as it overlooks several harems, or ladies' quarters; but under the promise I made that I would not look that way, the custodian told me that if I went up he would not see me. He looked out for me on my return, however, and on my giving him a franc he told me I could go up as often as I liked.

In the centre of the spacious courtyard, or quadrangle, stands a small building, the dome of which is supported by handsome antique columns; the interior is said to be the depository of ancient and very precious manuscripts, and the place is never to be opened. Just outside the entrance, a little way up a court, can be seen an ancient portal, on the lintel of which is engraved in Greek characters the words: "Thy Kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting Kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." This inscription brings to our minds that the building was originally a Christian church, finished in the commencement of the fourth century, but after a stormy history it was converted into a mosque.

Another portion of the city we shall visit with interest is the street Straight, which still exists, the street which Mark Twain says is as "straight as a dog's hind leg"; but we must remember that several encroachments have been made, first on one side and then on the other, since ancient times, when it was much wider than now; this can be seen by the triple gate at the entrance to the street; it was then



INTERIOR OF THE GREAT MOSQUE, DAMASCUS



VIEW IN THE STREET STRAIGHT, DAMASCUS
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MAN WITH THREE WIVES



TOMB OF FATIMA



HOUSE OF ANANIAS



STREET STRAIGHT



RIVER PIARPAR



WALL OF DAMASCUS

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also flanked on either side with columns, traces of which remain. It was originally quite straight—the only straight street in Damascus; and the name given to it, and by which it is called in the New Testament, is quite appropriate.

Near by the entrance of the east gate is shown the reputed house of Ananias, now, of course, converted into a church, and owned by the Latins; and not far away the house of Simon the leper, which, curiously enough, has been converted into a leper hospital. Electric trams have now been introduced in the streets of Damascus by European enterprise; the streets are, however, much too narrow for the traffic, and dogs and pedestrians who have not been used to this kind of locomotion find it at times rather inconvenient. The trams are seen to be well patronised by the natives, and are usually crowded.

A very pleasant walk may be made along the banks of the Barada river, which is the ancient Abana, on the outskirts of the town; and the dragomen show us the place on the wall where Paul was let down in a basket, also the place of his conversion, which, as the genuine site is some distance away, is now shown near the city, for the greater convenience of travellers. There is, however, a place of mournful interest near by this, as here were buried those Christians who fell victims to the horrible massacre of 1860.

In the Mussulman cemetery are shown the tombs of two of the wives of Mahomed, and also that of his celebrated daughter Fatima.

Although many of the reputed sites of Damascus must be more or less problematical, we can still imagine that scene of Naaman the Syrian—on the information given by the little captive maid—starting with his retinue for the long journey to see the prophet of Carmel; and we can quite understand his interjection: "Are not the waters of Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" We can imagine, too, a young man being led into the city, having been blinded on the way, and taken to the house of Ananias; and Saul the persecutor

became henceforth Paul the Christian, and the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

The railway between Damascus and the coast is a great convenience to the traveller, and permits of a great saving of time, besides allowing one to see much of the country in the picturesque districts of the Lebanon ranges. We start from the station at the west of the town near the soldiers' mosque; the line follows for some distance the valley down which the impetuous Barada river rushes, and this gives us an opportunity of seeing the river up to its source at Ain Figeh. We shall not fail to notice as we pass along the extensive works of the power station, at the foot of a waterfall, where the electricity is generated to supply Damascus. The train stops at Rayak about mid-day, to allow of time for lunch, and also to change on the branch line for Baalbec; and here we have evidence of what a factor in civilisation a railway is, for at the station there is quite a modern buffet, where a really tolerable lunch is obtainable, as well as European drinks of all kinds, if needed. We change carriages here, and after lunch go on the short journey to Baalbec, to inspect the wonderful ruins. The town of Baalbec lies amid very pleasant surroundings, and has the advantage of being well watered. It is of considerable antiquity, so much so that there has been a deal of speculation concerning its origin and subsequent history. There is, of course, a lot of mythology and tradition about the place; but as none of these fairy tales and Arab legends tell us anything of real importance they may be passed over, as they only tend to confuse the history of the town. Coming to the Biblical era, we find certain authors have identified Baalbec with the Baalgad of which Joshua makes mention, which place, however, must have been a considerable distance away, as he fixes the locality of Baalgad beyond the Jordan, at the foot of Hermon, and therefore somewhere near Dan.

But we get on safer ground when we read in 1 Kings ix. 17-18: "And Solomon built Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether, and Baalath and Tadmor in the wilderness." The



BAALBEC, GENERAL VIEW



DAMASCUS AND RIVER ABANA

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GROUP OF PILGRIMS READY TO START FOR GALILEE

striking resemblance between Baalath and Baalbec, not only in the similarity of their names, but also in that of their position in the desert near Tadmor, leads one reasonably to believe that the two places are identical. Indeed, Baalbec, owing to its advantageous position between Tyre and Tadmor, must have been one of the busy centres of commerce in Solomon's kingdom, which extended from Gaza to Taphsa on the Euphrates. It was, therefore, in all probability, one of the *dépôts* which that enterprising monarch built along the shortest route from the Euphrates and Mesopotamia, as Damascus was denied him, owing to his enmity to Adad, king of Damascus, an enmity which continued all through his reign.

It is probable, therefore, that Solomon was the founder of the town, and that in his old age, in order to please his heathen concubines, he erected here a temple in honour of Baal, all which would harmonise perfectly with the popular tradition that Solomon was the first builder of Baalbec.

We know, of course, that there were several Baalaths in Palestine at different times, but this is the only one that can be connected with Tadmor in the wilderness. It is likely that when Solomon died the Phœnicians from the coast became masters of the country, and concentrated all their skill in embellishing and ornamenting the temple of Baal. It was no doubt the Phœnicians who changed the name of Baalath to Baalbec, the termination corresponding to the Phœnician word *beka*, a town; and although the German excavators who recently so very thoroughly explored the ruins say they found no Phœnician remains, yet the very name shows that in its early history the town became a sanctuary of Syrophœnician worship. The explorations of the Germans led them to the conclusion that the remains as we see them to-day are wholly Roman; but, even if this be so, Baalbec must have been a place of considerable importance before their occupation, or they would never have erected such magnificent buildings there, and lavished such a wealth of embellishment and

ornamentation as only Roman artificers and Roman artists could do.

When Julius Cæsar invaded Syria he substituted the Greek word Heliopolis for the Phœnician rendering Baalbec, but, of course, both words have the same meaning, viz. City of the Sun. Julius made it a Roman colony, and there are several coins and medals extant of that time, proving, together with several inscriptions brought to light, that the erection of the temples as we find them now was begun by the Romans in the early part of the Christian era.

It is probable that they were begun in the first century under Augustus, and continued till the third, the work being pushed forward with great activity under Septimus Severus and his son Caracalla. The ruins now called the Acropolis, which are, of course, the great attraction of the place for visitors, are enclosed by walls, and a charge of about four shillings a head is made for admission, the ticket lasting for one day; on subsequent days admission can be had for half price. We enter up by steps through what was once the portico, passing into an hexagonal first court, and then into a large second court. From this we see the six columns which remain standing of the great Temple of the Sun, which have been the wonder of all who have beheld them; these six are all that now remain of some fifty-four (some think sixty) which stood around the temple, but many of which are now lying prostrate in a confused mass all about.

The columns are sixty feet high, and were reared in three sections, each measuring seven and a half feet in diameter; and the joints of the columns are so perfectly smooth and true throughout the whole diameter, and fit so truly, that in no part can you insert the point of your penknife. The columns are raised on a huge pedestal, and with the massive entablature and cornice the whole measures ninety feet high. As we examine portions of the cornice that have fallen we are amazed, and ask ourselves the question: How were those stones reared, and how was that bulky entablature—a sample of which we see lying on the ground



TEMPLE OF BACCHUS



RIVER ABANA



GREAT STONES IN WALL



INTERIOR OF RUINS



TEMPLE OF VENUS



OLD MOSQUE

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GREAT STONE AT BAALBEC



CEDARS OF LEBANON



KHAN AT SAREPTA

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—raised ninety feet high, and sculptured with such exquisite grace and fineness of detail?

We examined in one place the sculptured bunches of grapes and vine-leaves; they were as exquisitely worked as a cameo, even the veins on the leaves being wrought with exact and delicate detail.

We examined the superstructure and foundations; and it is no wonder the columns stand for ages, for they are massive enough to bear a mountain.

What a wonder of architectural beauty and grandeur this edifice must have been in Baalbec's palmy days! And what we still see fills our minds with admiration and wonderment—

“No, not in Egypt's ruined land,
Nor 'mid the Grecian isles,
Tower monuments so vast, so grand,
As Baalbec's early piles.”

This gigantic building was the final effort of Pagan Rome at the period of its highest splendour when it ruled the world.

The adjoining Temple of Jupiter, as it has generally been called, but which the German explorers tell us should be the Temple of Bacchus, is in a more complete state of preservation, and is one of the most beautiful of the antiquities found in Syria. The dimensions of the temple are two hundred and twenty-five feet long and one hundred and ten feet wide; one row of nine columns still remains, which with their base and capitals stand sixty feet high; the columns carry the roof, in the ceiling of which are sculptured designs of incomparable beauty and delicacy.

The floors of the various courts are strewn with blocks of stone, fragments of its former splendour, which have been carefully removed from the débris by the explorers; and two large heaps of stone catapult balls are lying piled up in pyramid-shaped heaps on the ground, these being probably of the time of the Arab or Mahomedan period.

In order to form a truer idea of the gigantic magnitude of the work, we take a walk around the outer walls of the

enclosure, and are astounded by the size of some of the stones built into the wall; there are three, we find here, of the largest stones ever hewn out of the rock; they are nearly seventy feet long and thirteen feet square. How they were hewn out and brought here, and, above all, how they were lifted into their present position, nineteen feet high, is a problem which even the engineers of our own time are unable to solve.

Another little gem of a temple which we find outside the enclosing walls of the main buildings, standing amid some poplar trees, is known as the Circular Temple, or Temple of Venus. It is surrounded by a peristyle of eight Corinthian columns, and was at one time converted into a Greek church. Now, leaving the Temple of Venus, the road to the left leads to the ruins of a large mosque, which is adorned with three rows of columns; and it is thought that it was originally built for a church from the materials of the older temples, but was during the Arabian period converted into a mosque.

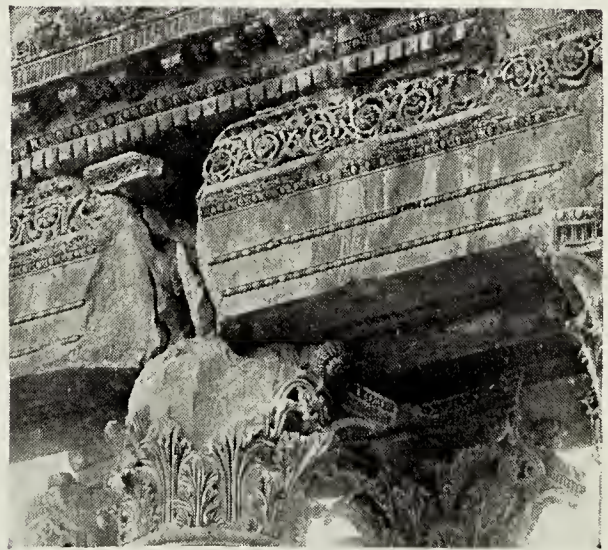
Before leaving Baalbec we must—as, indeed, all tourists do—pay a visit to the quarries situated near the lower entrance of the town, near the railway station, from which the stones were hewn which were used in the construction of the temples; and here we find a block of stone, sister to those we saw in the walls, but slightly larger, squared and hewn, and is one of the largest ever cut and worked by man. It is sixty-nine feet long and fourteen feet square, and is computed to weigh 1500 tons. There is no doubt that it was meant to be placed alongside the other monoliths we saw in the west wall, and it is actually raised at one end from the ground. We are left to wonder why it was not used after being quarried out. Why was it left here? Had the race of giants died out, or did the contractor turn bankrupt, or what could have been the reason? We must remember that in olden times large works of this kind, which were undertaken by a powerful monarch during his reign, were stopped immediately on his death; and so we find among the sculptures in the temples in the



COLUMNS OF GREAT TEMPLE OF THE SUN, BAALBEC

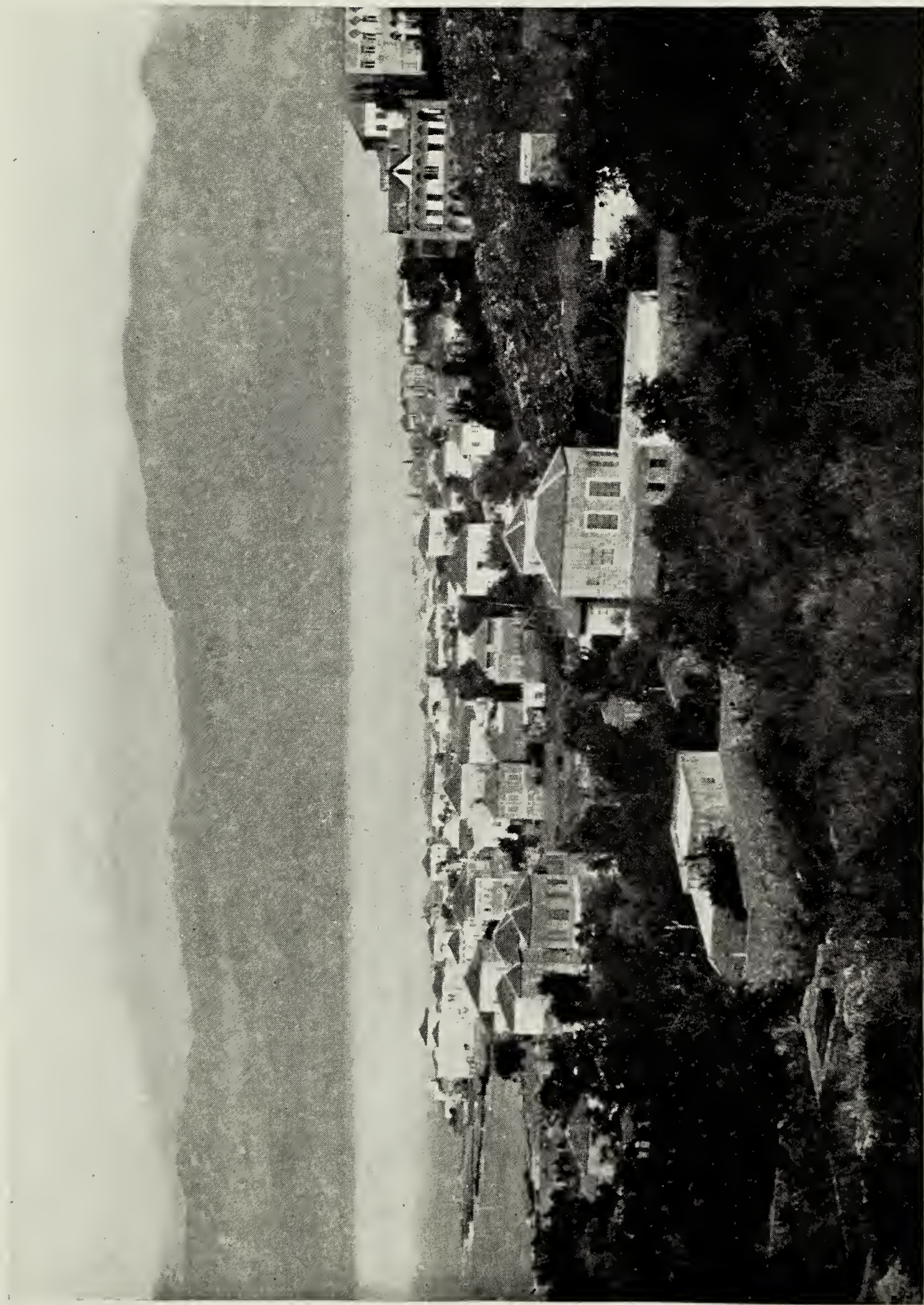


LEANING COLUMN



DETAIL OF ENTABLATURE

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BEYROUT FROM THE AMERICAN COLLEGE

Acropolis work partially executed and abruptly stopped. The same thing can be seen in the temples in Egypt, and also in the quarries at Jerusalem; and if this be really the reason of the stoppage of the work here, it seems to point to an older period than that of the Romans, notwithstanding what the Germans have said.

However much any one with large expectations may have been disappointed in visiting the ruined sites of Palestine, they could scarcely leave the ruins of Baalbec except with feelings of wonderment, not unmingled with bewilderment, at the grandeur of design, the grace of execution, and the gigantic scale of the undertaking.

The famous cedars of Lebanon may very well be visited from Baalbec, but can only be approached with comfort in the summer months, because of the snow and wetness of the soil. The famous grove consists of a few very old, and some clumps of young, trees; but I am told there are many others known, and no doubt there are others as yet unknown in the mountain ranges, of other parts of the Lebanon, of these "trees of the Lord, which He hath planted."

The rail journey is again taken to Rayak, where the through train from Damascus is rejoined and continued to Beyrout. At our highest point even in summer the snow-line is reached, and we get a very fine view on our left of Mount Hermon. By and by we get a glimpse of the sea and the beautiful port of Beyrout below us, finely situated in a deep bay of the Mediterranean, reminding us of a similar scene at Naples or Genoa on the Italian coast.

Beyrout is the ancient Berytus, and has been during its history in the hands of the Phœnicians, Romans, Christians, Saracens, and Turks. It is the most important maritime port of Syria, and the nearest seaport to Damascus.

It must have been an important place under the Roman rule, as is evidenced by the numerous columns lying buried beneath the soil; and wherever excavations are made, as for foundations or drainage, huge columns, the remains of

baths, theatres, and hippodromes, constructed by Agrippa for the pleasure of the inhabitants of his time, are found.

It is still a large place, and owing to the salubrity of its climate, the excellent harbour for steamers, its position for commerce, and its educational advantages, it bids fair to become increasingly popular.

It is now well supplied with pure water from the Dog river by a British water company, and the environs offer many delightful excursions. At the Dog river, about five miles away, to which it is a pleasant drive, are to be found some interesting Assyrian and Egyptian inscriptions carved on the rocks, and there have lately been found others of smaller importance recording the visit of Napoleon I.

The American college is very beautifully situated, overlooking the town, the sea, and the Lebanon mountains; it was opened in 1866, and as its importance has increased it has from time to time been enlarged, and now contains some sixty professors and nine hundred students. It was presided over for many years by Dr. Thompson, the author of the well-known work, *The Land and the Book*.

The president at the present day is Dr. Howard Bliss, whose work for the Palestine Exploration Society at Lachish and Jerusalem was attended with such important results.

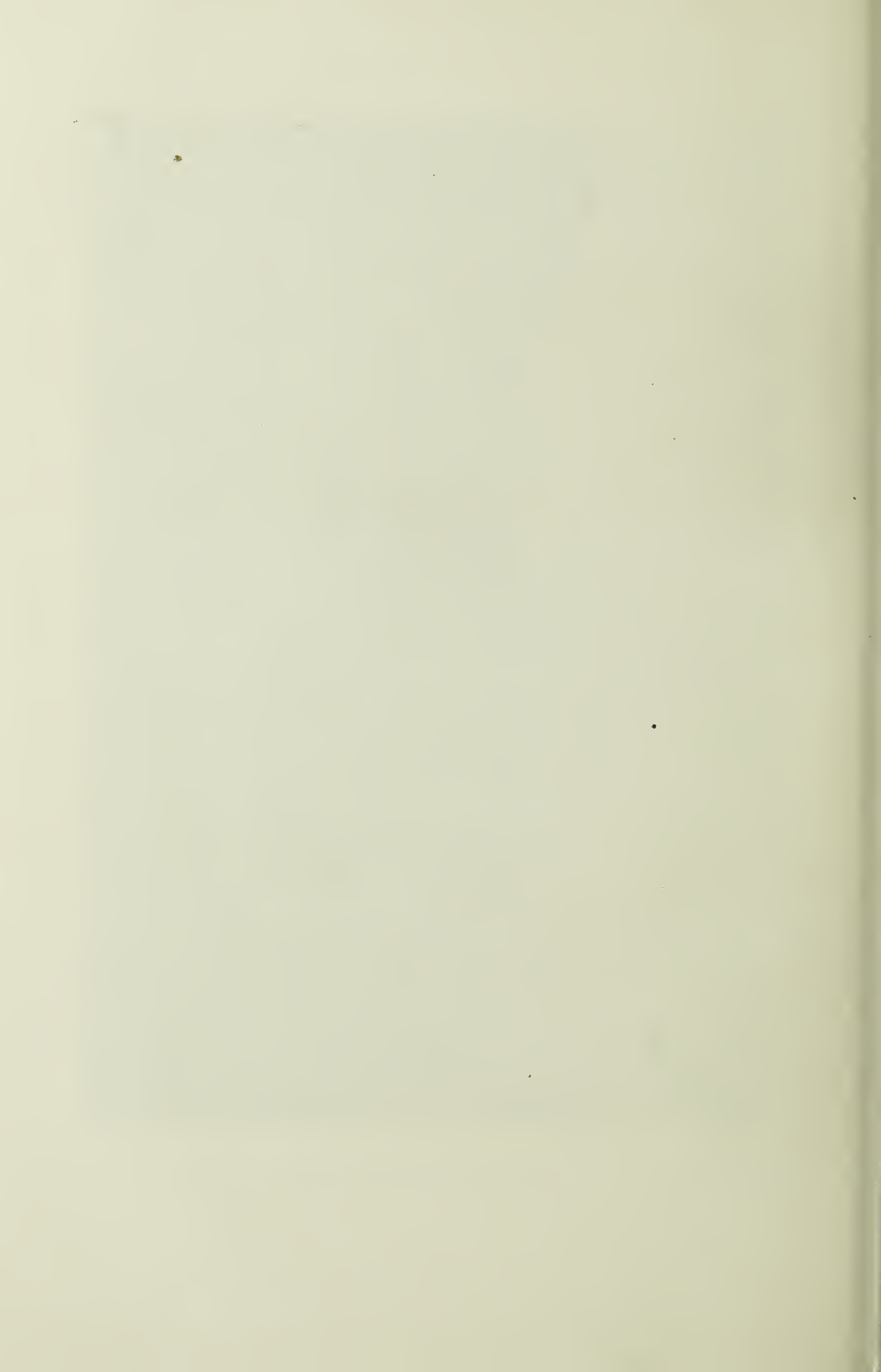
The coast route to the old Phœnician towns of Sidon and Tyre is well worth the journey, continuing on, if possible to Acre and Haifa, but horses would be necessary for this journey beyond Sidon. We ride through plantations of young mulberry trees, silk culture being extensively carried on round here, and some silk mills are seen.

Sidon has but few attractions; it is a decaying town, and is chiefly interesting on account of its historical associations. That it is a very old town may be inferred from its being spoken of in Gen. x. 15, as "the firstborn son of Canaan." It thus seems to have been of earlier origin than Tyre, as Tyre was peopled from Sidon. That it was an important place may be gathered from the circumstance



TYNE

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BEYROUT AND THE AMERICAN COLLEGE



ST. GEORGE'S BAY, BEYROUT

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that it gave its name to the whole district, and at one time Sidon was the term used to designate Phœnicia in general. It has several times been destroyed and rebuilt, and during the Roman occupation it had its own senate and national council. In 1840 the fortress was destroyed by the combined fleet of England and France; and in 1860, 1800 Christians here shared with the Christians of Damascus and the Lebanon the terrible massacre of that time.

Sidon is credited with growing the finest and most delicious oranges in the world; which are, unlike those at Jaffa, grown on trees, not bushes, and, unlike them, are true oranges, not hybrids.

The people of Sidon had noted the success of the orange gardens at Jaffa, and asked themselves: "Why cannot we grow oranges here?" The experiment was tried, and the oranges are certainly superior to those grown at Jaffa, being thin-skinned and of most luscious flavour. The ruined fortress is a good point of vantage for overlooking the town, most of the buildings of which, as well as the fortress itself, appear to have been built of older materials.

Leaving Sidon and continuing the coast route for Tyre, we soon come to a small village, with a primitive khan by the roadside, now called Sarfend; this is the ancient Zarephath of the Old and the Sarepta of the New Testaments. The people here are a very exclusive and bigoted sect of the Mahomedans.

The next place is Tyre, which, although not so old as Sidon, is a very old city, as it is mentioned as early as the time of Joshua. We also read that Hiram, king of Tyre, who supplied Solomon with cedarwood for the building of the temple, also sent skilled masons and carpenters to assist, or probably rather to superintend, the construction of the palace.

In the time of Nebuchadnezzar it withstood a siege of thirteen years.

During the Roman occupation Tyre was an important city, and was regarded as well-nigh impregnable. At one time it possessed glass works and sugar factories, besides

being celebrated for its dye-works; it was also the chief centre of the maritime trade of the Mediterranean. In contrast to all its former splendour, we see that it is now only a poor place, its trade having been diverted to Beyrout. The streets are miserable, the houses dilapidated; it is simply a poor stricken fishing village, and the fishermen spread their nets on the ruins of its ancient opulence.

What a wonderful fulfilment we see here of the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel: "Is this your joyous city whose antiquity is of ancient days, the crowning city whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth?" "The Lord hath given a commandment to destroy the strongholds thereof." "They shall destroy the wall of Tyre, and break down her towers; it shall be a place for the spreading of nets."

When those words were spoken seven hundred years before Christ, Tyre was the largest and richest city in the Mediterranean Sea: it was covered with palaces, it sent its ships to every port, its merchants were indeed princes, its inhabitants the honourable of the earth; and of all the places upon which such a doom could have been conceived Tyre surely would have been the last.

But as we look at it to-day, with its blackened columns lying prostrate in the water, columns which once adorned the entrances to palaces, and as we watch the fishermen spreading their nets on the ruins to dry, we cannot but acknowledge that there is a God Who rules in the heavens, and that His word is sure.

It is a long distance from Tyre to Carmel along the rugged, rockbound coast and over the ladder of Tyre, and the journey is usually broken at Achzib to stay the night. The village is now called Zib; it is mentioned once in Scripture—Josh. xix. 29. It is only a small place, but the curious fountain is interesting, where the women at even-tide assemble to get their supply of water, while a man in the inside pumps it up.

Continuing our journey, we next come to Acre, the ancient Accho of the Old Testament. In the time of the

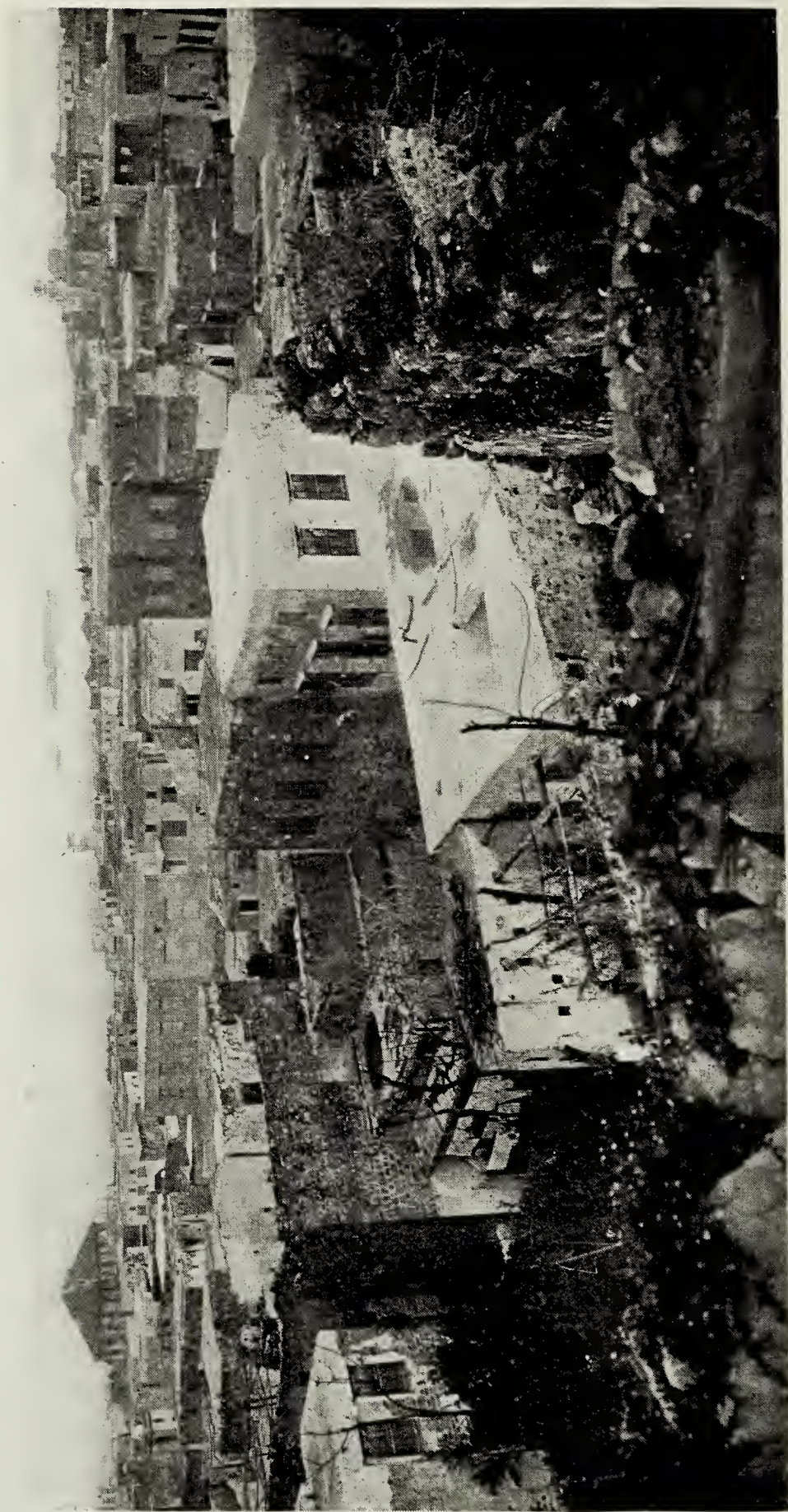


HAIFA FROM THE SANDS



CONVENT ON CARMEL

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SIDON

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Emperor Claudius it was a Roman colony, and it is recorded that the Apostle Paul spent a day here. It attained its chief importance in the time of the crusaders, who made its port their chief landing-place; it was here Richard Cœur de Lion landed with the crusaders under him, and after the fall of the crusading power at Hattin the place came into the hands of Saladin. At a later period the notorious Jezzar Pasha was governor here for awhile, and established for himself an independent sovereignty extending from Baalbec in the north to Cæsarea in the south.

It was during his cruel sway that Napoleon besieged Acre, but, the English coming to the aid of the city, Napoleon was compelled to abandon his project.

Ibrahim Pasha with an Egyptian army took the place after great slaughter in 1832, but in 1840 the Powers intervened in favour of Turkey, since which time it has enjoyed a more peaceful career. It lies in a fine position at the north end of the bay, and looks across to Haifa, which is now its great rival as a port and commercial centre.

Haifa is a pretty and prosperous town lying under the slopes of Carmel; at the south end of the Bay of Acre, and here we find, besides the native bazaars, some good European shops and two hotels. Since steamers have taken to call here regularly the place has enjoyed considerable prosperity.

It is the port for Nazareth and Tiberias, and the Hauran railway, which starts from here and communicates with the south end of the Sea of Galilee at Semak, continues on to Damascus. Haifa is a very pleasant as well as convenient place at which to make a stay, and is a good centre for numerous excursions.

At the south end of Haifa, on the strip of plain between Mount Carmel and the sea, the attractive German settlement of the Temple Colony has been established; their clean and neat villa residences, built in the European style, form a pleasing contrast to the dirty and squalid houses of the Orientals. Well-cultivated gardens, olive groves, and vineyards adjoin the residences, and fields of growing

corn, in which is situated a windmill, stretch farther beyond.

Adjoining the colony is a good hospital, and various mission agencies and schools are established.

But it is Mount Carmel, the beautiful mountain range at the back, that gives the greatest interest to the locality, and a good carriage-road now leads from Haifa up to the Carmelite church and convent buildings on the promontory half-an-hour away.

From the grounds of the convent a good view is obtained over Haifa and the Bay of Acre. The building here has been destroyed many times since it was first founded in the twelfth century, and from time to time many of the brothers in charge have been killed. When Napoleon besieged Acre it was used as a hospital for his wounded soldiers, who after his retreat were murdered by the Turks, and they lie buried in the small garden in front of the church, a memorial pyramid marking the spot. The building was in 1821 entirely destroyed by Abdullah, Pasha of Acre, under the pretext that the monks might be expected to favour the enemies of the Turks. The present imposing building was erected with money collected by John Battisa, a lay brother of Frascati, who, like Peter the hermit, itinerated through Europe to collect the money, and through his indefatigable and enthusiastic efforts the building was reared. Visitors of all creeds and nationalities are welcomed, and accommodation is provided for such as wish to stay. There is a cave under the altar in the church, in which, according to a popular tradition, the prophet Elijah dwelt, and a large square cave on the hill-side below is shown which is called the School of the Prophets. The building opposite the church, overlooking the sea, is a lighthouse, the lamp of which is lighted at dusk each evening by one of the monks of the convent; and there are rooms below for the accommodation of pilgrims, with stables adjoining. This building was erected as a country seat by Abdullah Pasha after he had destroyed the convent from the materials of the building he had pulled down. In the spring-time the



GROUP OF PILGRIMS AT FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN



FOUNTAIN OF ACHZIB



RUINS OF CÆSAREA

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ground all around is bestrewn with flowers, and owing to the abundant water supply the vegetation of the mountain is said to keep green long after it has dried up in other parts of the country. The convent is not, as many casual visitors suppose, erected on the place of sacrifice, which is on the farther side of the mountain, sixteen miles away. The convent stands only five hundred feet from the level of the sea, whereas the place of sacrifice is sixteen hundred feet above sea-level.

To visit this we may ride along the whole crest of the range, or, better still, go some distance along the Nazareth road, over the new Kishon bridge, and then, turning to the right, follow the course of the Kishon till we come to the ford close by the mound known as the Tel-el-Kasis or hill of the priests, so called from the tradition—probably a true one—that here Elijah slew the prophets of Baal. We cross the ford here and ride through the plain to the base of the hill, and cannot but be charmed with the wealth of the flowers through which we ride. Palestine is the land of flowers; but Carmel possesses a greater variety and a more marvellous affluence of beauty than anywhere else we have seen.

“Oh, what a wilderness of flowers!
It seemed as though from all the bowers,
And fairest fields of all the year,
The mingled spoil were scattered here.”

There is no wonder the sacred writers extolled the “excellency of Carmel,” and that the abundant vegetation, its park-like slopes covered with oaks and pine trees, its fruits, and, more than all, the supreme beauty of its flora, should have inspired the Hebrew poets to chant its praises. The path leads steeply up the mountain to its summit, where we find a Latin church erected, it is claimed, on the site of Elijah’s sacrifice; and an occasional service is held here to commemorate the event. Certainly the spot where it stands seems to bear out the Biblical description of the memorable scene, and the hill of the priests below, on the banks of the Kishon, where the false prophets were slain, make the

narrative as real to the imagination and thought as an historical story can well be pictured.

A few minutes below the summit of the hill a large spring of water exists, which an old Druse native who came while I was examining it told me never dries up even in the hottest summer, and they have a legend that it was from this spring Elijah's men obtained the water to pour over his sacrifice. If this be the case, it may well do away with the difficulty sometimes raised: where, after the long season of drought, did Elijah get the water in such plentiful supply to pour over the sacrifice? It often happens that Bible difficulties, created in the mind, vanish when we get to know the geographical conditions of the places; and here, too, we can see that, even failing any other supply, the sea-water from the Mediterranean would have answered the purpose. The view from the summit of Carmel on a clear day is unrivalled, and nowhere else from one spot could be seen such a variety of historical interests as here. Away to the right are the mountains of Samaria. Before us lies the great plain of Esdraelon, with all its crowding memories; across the plain lies Jezreel, Gilboa, Shunem, Nain, Endor, and Mount Tabor. Over towards the left are the Galilean hills, in which Nazareth lies embosomed, and beyond these Mount Hermon's snowy heights are seen. Behind us lies the Mediterranean, its crested ripples glistening in the sunshine; and on the seashore the ruins of Cæsarea Palestina, so named to distinguish it from Cæsarea Philippi, are clearly seen.

Oh! the memories all these places call up; they are too many to catalogue, but—

“How beautiful!
Not the calm beauty of a woodland world,
Fraught with sweet idleness and minstrel dreams;
But beauty which awakes the intellect
More than the feelings.”

The ride along the coast from Haifa to Jaffa is sometimes taken, but it is a long, tiring, and uninteresting journey, not worth the trouble, the only place worth noticing being



RIVER KISHON



SPREADING NETS AT TYRE



SPRING ON MOUNT CARMEL



PLACE OF SACRIFICE, CARMEL



PILGRIMS WAITING FOR BAGGAGE



FLOWERS OF CARMEL

[To face p. 208]



ARRIVAL OF LUGGAGE



SORTING OUT BAGGAGE



A PILGRIMS' HOSPICE



THE PILGRIMS' CHURCH



PILGRIMS RESTING AT EVENTIDE



PILGRIMS MAKING PURCHASES

[To face p. 210]

Cæsarea; but we advise the traveller to be content with the view of Cæsarea either from the heights of Carmel or from the passing vessel. Sometimes a carriage runs from Haifa to Jaffa during dry weather, taking two days for the journey, and sleeping one night in a native khan with very poor accommodation; even by this route Cæsarea is missed altogether, and the journey is not recommended except under the necessity of catching a steamer at Jaffa. The better plan is to take a steamer from Haifa for Jaffa, when the journey is done in one night.

We ourselves visited Cæsarea by horseback on one occasion, and found it of very little interest except to the archæologist, it being simply a heap of ruins all tumbled together in a confused mass. Its principal Biblical interest centres in the visit of Peter to the centurion, in response to the vision he had on the roof of Simon's house at Jaffa. Paul lay here in prison for two years while on his way to Rome, after he had appealed to Cæsar. Built by Herod and made by him a capital of his province, he lavishly expended money and labour in building a palace of great magnificence, the only remains of which are the fallen columns and capitals we see lying about to-day, and the ruins have been for long used as a quarry for procuring stone for building in other places. The site of the old prison remains, and is still used for the same purpose.

There has in recent years been a small colony of Bosnian refugees settled here, and from the fallen stones they have built their houses; they are cultivating the land around, and, in any way they can, earning a subsistence.

CHAPTER XIV

FAREWELL TO THE PILGRIM LAND

NOTHING was more interesting to me during a lengthened stay in Jerusalem than watching the arrival, doings, journeyings and departure of pilgrims.

We have seen them disembarking in huge boats from the steamer at Jaffa, seen them tramping along the road, or, since the railway has run, seen trainloads of them packed in the compartments of the carriages like herrings in a box and brought up to Jerusalem, where they are taken to hospices and lodged and cared for under a system as admirable as it is effective. An enterprising German, resident in Jerusalem, contracts, it is said, to land them and their belongings at Jaffa, bring them by train to Jerusalem, cart their belongings to the hospice, and again see them in like manner provided for on their return, for one pound per head—cheap enough one would think, but it is the numbers that make it pay, for it is said he clears £500 a year by it. There are nearly always some pilgrims coming to Jerusalem, but during the spring months, and especially at Easter-time, as many as 10,000 to 15,000 are brought up in a week. They are ciceroned from the station by a uniformed dragoman attached to the Consulate, taken to the hospice and shown their apartments; they then await the arrival of their baggages, which are usually packages wrapped round with coarse canvas and tied with cords. These are brought up in wagons, and on arrival are trundled off unceremoniously, so that the wagons can quickly return for more. The pilgrims watch for their coming, and eagerly sort out their own packages, which they carry to their rooms, quickly returning with their kettles for water to make tea—for Russians always take their kettle with them.

It is very interesting to watch the crowds as they arrive; some are almost worn out by the fatigue of their long journey; some are old, and others cripples; but there is a strong fellow-feeling among them, and they help each other, the strong assisting the weak, and the vigorous the cripples.

Then day by day for a week they are taken the round of the usual holy sites; day by day they may be seen kissing the stones, altars and relics; and day by day visiting the churches and joining with devotion and gladness in the worship.

In the evening, after their day's tramping round, they sit in little groups to rest, and recall the sights they have witnessed, and give each other the information they have gleaned.

They are all very plainly dressed in sombre dark grey garments; the women wear shawls on their heads, and the men round, turban-shaped hats or caps; all wear coarse, thick clothes and stout boots, for they have come from a cold country, and most of them seem very poor. But, though poor-looking, they all have money to spend, for it is a journey they have been looking forward to for a long time, and they have been saving for it all their lives. Besides this, many of them are delegates, representing some village, and bring with them the results of collections, so that they may, on behalf of those who cannot come for themselves, lay some fee or offering on the tomb of Christ and other shrines. Then they purchase to take back with them some souvenir from the Holy City for each who has contributed; and so vendors of trinkets during the pilgrim season do a considerable trade in coloured-glass bracelets, mother-of-pearl crosses, rosaries, holy candles, and even shrouds, which they buy to be their baptismal garment for the Jordan ceremony, after which it is carefully preserved to be their shroud. Then they have to make other purchases—food and fruit for their midday meal when on excursions, articles to take home with them, and in most cases a small, gaily-decorated box or trunk in

which to pack the things they have bought, which box will doubtless serve as an heirloom for succeeding generations. Some of the parties come for a longer stay in the country, and after the week spent in Jerusalem may be seen travelling in a long procession to Samaria and Galilee; a few of them who can afford it take hired donkeys with them, but the bulk of them walk, and carry on their backs their bundles, also food required for the journey.

I saw on one occasion a party of no less than 1400 start in one procession from Jerusalem for the north, and this I photographed, as I also did the interesting group as they had congregated in the courtyard of the hospice ready to start, but waiting the appearance of their leader. I noticed one old man was profitably employing the time by giving an address, and the people were intent in listening to his harangue—the face of one woman being quite a study in her eagerness to catch every word.

The pilgrims are for the most part very meek and child-like in their demeanour, as well as devout in their manners and behaviour; and it seems scarcely conceivable that it is this same class of people we read of who throw bombs and wreak such terrible vengeance in their own country on those in authority, so much so that their emperor always goes in fear of his life, some of his ancestors having been brutally assassinated. Surely these mild and gentlemanly-looking folk must be badly governed to have their passions roused to the extent of doing deeds of violence, incendiarism, and assassination.

Of course, we think it a great pity that they are deluded into believing so many things that cannot possibly be true, and which may tend to bring on an unholy reaction as they become better educated; but at the same time we must remember that pilgrims are not the only ignorant and deluded people who visit the country, and although we think it is painful at times to see the ignorance and delusions of some of them, we think it more painful to witness the careless and frivolous—indeed, sometimes disrespectful—behaviour as manifested by some of the tourists who



PROCESSION OF 1400 PILGRIMS STARTING NORTH FROM JERUSALEM

smile at the credulity of the pilgrims, and which make us wonder why they came to Palestine at all. "What went ye out for to see?" was the question the Saviour put concerning the disciples of John, and we have had reason to ask the same question with regard to some tourists whom we have met in the country.

We do know why the pilgrims have come; in the majority of cases it is that they may lay their tribute of love on the sites of sacred association; but it is hard to know why some tourists have come, or what they expected to find here. "Are you enjoying yourselves?" I once asked a little group of young people I saw. "Not at all," they replied; "we would rather be at Margate, for there we should see something going on on the sands to amuse us."

"Do you never read your Bibles?" I once heard a lady ask two young sisters, who had asked an absurdly ridiculous question. "Why, no," they replied, "we never do." "Then why did you come to this country?" she asked pleasantly. "Because we expected to have some fun," they said; and although the lady admired the sisters' candour, she was sorry for them. A dragoman was showing a party round the Church of the Sepulchre, and when they went through the Chapel of the Angels he said: "And now we are coming to the tomb of Christ." "Did they ever find the body?" asked an Englishman, a J.P., and when reminded that it was hardly a matter for joking, he declared that he did not intend it for a joke, he had asked it in all seriousness; for he said he had forgotten, if he ever knew, the sequel to the account of the burial.

The writer heard an amusing conversation at Jericho one day illustrating the almost inconceivable ignorance of some tourists. I was seated in an arbour in the garden of the hotel there, having some tea, when three well-dressed Americans came and seated themselves in the cool of the arbour near me.

They had just returned from the Jordan, and one of them, calling to their dragoman, said: "Come here, George, and just tell me again all about this—what was

his name?—who came over the Jordan with the children of Israel.” “It was Joshua, sir,” replied the man. “Joshua, Joshua—well, who was he? Never heard of him before.” Then the poor dragoman, so pleased that he had got an engagement, retailed over for the American’s benefit an account of Joshua’s coming over the Jordan into the promised land. “Well, now,” said one to the other, “I guess that’s worth knowing. Tell me that again, George; I am going to put that down, and I’ll have that printed in a book.” And the dragoman laboriously repeated his tale, the American writing down the information in a note-book, and apparently pluming himself upon having made some precious discovery, till he had asked again: “Now how long do you say that is ago, George?” “Three thousand years, sir,” replied the man; when pencil and note-book were cast aside, with the remark: “Well, now, you don’t make me believe that. Why, that was before the Declaration of Independence!”—the American apparently thinking that there was no history before that time.


I have mentioned these incidents to show that it is not pilgrims only who have some amount of ignorance; and although they may be misled, and shown the stocks of Christ, and the marks of the print of His feet, the stone which cried “Hosanna!” and the stones which would have cried out, the stone containing the impress of the foot of the cock which crowed when Peter denied his Lord—all these made black and greasy by the kisses of the pilgrims; and the tree on which Judas hanged himself, with a thousand other legends too ridiculous to mention, yet no worse really than many other things repeated from time to time by those who should know better.

No doubt it has been difficult sometimes in the past to differentiate between some of the things which were false and the true, and many have found it a difficult task, for various reasons, to get genuine information.

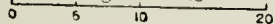
Some, indeed, have written upon Palestine who were merely arm-chair geographers, and have themselves never been to the country at all. Others there were who have

PALESTINE

English Miles



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been scrupulously anxious to get their information on the spot, but have been at the mercy of biased and sometimes ignorant dragomen. We heard of one such who went through the country with such a man as guide, with his note-book always ready at hand. And when they came to a village, the would-be author inquired of his man the name of the place. *Ana mush araf*, replied the man, and promptly it was put down into the note-book. Then, as they came to another village, the question as to its name was again put. *Ana mush araf*, was the reply, and unsuspectingly this was noted down in the book. Another and yet another village was passed, and yet each time it was *Ana mush araf*; and the author stated in his book that very many of the villages in Palestine are called by the same name, unaware that the man had truthfully answered him in Arabic: "I don't know."

But we are glad to be able to record that intelligent, scientific, and careful investigation and exploration in this country is gradually dispelling that which is false; that an earnest spirit of inquiry and an intense interest is bringing to light the truth, and the knowledge obtained is producing fruit in making clear and plain Bible truths, by which, we trust, many difficulties to belief and stumbling-blocks in the way of understanding those truths will be swept away.

Palestine has often been called the land of startling contrasts, but there is nothing one can see more striking in the way of contrasts, surely, than the varying impressions made upon tourists who visit the land. We have heard some say that they were disappointed in everything they saw. Some have carried away the impression that "Jerusalem is a dirty, filthy ruin of an old town, full of wretchedness, bad smells, and discomfort"; that "Jericho is a beastly hole, full of vermin and thieves"; that "the country is a barren, bleak, and stony wilderness, and all the people robbers or liars." "I am glad I have been to the Holy Land," said one, "but I shall never want to come again." But to many it is the most interesting and enjoy-

able of all the lands of the earth; they are never weary of viewing its scenes made sacred by old Bible story; and it is the feeling attaching to the sacred associations—sentiment, some would call it—that often makes all the difference between those who enjoy it and those who do not. And we who have caught the spirit of the land, have felt the ineffable charm of its landscape, its mountains and streams, and the deep pathos of its history, are sorry to know that some have come and gone away disappointed, because we feel that they have obtained a wrong impression of the Holy City and the Holy Land.

Certainly it is hardly a country one would choose as a mere holiday resort. There is, I grant you, better scenery to be found nearer home; there is more enchanting and varied scenery in Switzerland, more picturesque landscapes to be found in Italy; but the hallowed associations are wanting there—that soulful difference one can hardly define in words, but which is in Palestine to be found by those who seek for it as nowhere else.

Have we not sometimes seen some one treasure up a trinket out of all proportion to its intrinsic value—a trifling article that no one else would care to pick up in the street? And why? It was because it was the last gift of a dear one, and it spoke of a memory of love.

I have often watched a man as week by week he went and stood by the grave of a dear one he had lost; and as he stood silently over the grave he seemed to be looking into its depths, and then we saw the tears fall, and yet by and by a smile would come over his countenance; then he would cry: "Good-bye, my darling," and go away. What was it that caused him to come there, and then the tear to fall, and then the smile? Was it the simple grave there, the mound of earth, that he loved to visit? Not so, surely; the grave in itself had no charm for him, but it was the vision of his dear one; and the tear, and the smile, and all the feeling he had manifested there were caused by the memory brought up of kind words and gentle acts, and the inextinguishable love that had bound the two together,



PILGRIMS BUYING SHROUDS



[To face p. 218]

PILGRIMS RESTING ON A JOURNEY

and so had transformed that grave into a sacred shrine, a well-loved spot, a sweet retreat.

And as we have seen pilgrims kneel in the Holy Sepulchre and passionately kiss the slab of stone on which they believed their Saviour had lain for His anointing, and as, too, we have watched a woman enter what she believed to be His tomb, and, kneeling, press her cheek against the slab of marble on which she believed He had reposed in the sepulchre, and as we saw the tears welling up from a heart filled with ecstatic love, we thought we knew the reason why. And when we have seen the pilgrims also, as they trod the ground of the country, fall and kiss the stones on which they supposed their Redeemer had walked, we knew it was because He had touched the land, and because of the vision they got of Him, and the memory of

“ . . . all He did and said,
And suffered for us here below,”

that the land became hallowed, illumined, transformed, and transfigured into a Holy Land for them, and a type of the Heavenly Canaan where they hope to see His face without a veil between.

And here, then, kind reader, our pilgrimage together—so far as it has been a pilgrimage—ends; and we hope, at any rate, if we have not indulged in some of the pilgrim’s beliefs, that we have been imbued with the pilgrim’s spirit, and that we shall carry away with us, and ever be filled with, the pilgrim’s joy.

“ Let my voice ring out o’er all the earth,
Through all the griefs and strife,
With a golden joy and a silver mirth,
Thank God for life.”

THE END

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